

# THE CLEARING HOUSE

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## Editorial

### THE LIBRARY AS A SYMBOL AND A PROPHECY

The protestant reformation was founded upon the belief that the individual who could read might interpret for himself the riddles of the holy writ. It was Martin Luther's belief in the ability of every reader and the right of every reader to self-determination which inspired him to undertake the great labor of translating the Bible from the Church's Latin into the speech that was used in the kitchens, the guild halls, and the fields. In some degree the same motive was responsible for King James's command to make a translation of the *Book* into the tongue familiar to the English laymen. Whatever significance this movement had in history, it was only the foundation for the related but more radical belief that men could manage their own temporal affairs as well as their heavenly ones. Many generations worked at shaping this concept. Then Jefferson and his fellow rebels in the American colonies turned it into a vigorous social experiment.

Jefferson was not exactly a snob, but neither was he a *sans-culotte*. He shared with practically all the other founders of the American republic the belief that social and political policies were to be determined by men who were literate, not by a misguided rabble that puts a prize on all who are unlettered and unwashed. But Jefferson and the others entered into no conspiracy to keep the masses ignorant so that a privileged few could use the power of the state. It was, instead, the most distinctive contribution these men made when they saw that govern-

ment and education are a single function, and that the potentialities of American democracy must always be realized in direct ratio to the number of citizens who were realistically educated for the peculiar responsibilities of active citizenship in a democratic republic.

It took a hundred years, it is true, to find in America any good evidence that the people at large in the several States shared this notion of education for all at public expense. In the first years of the republic there were many people, and powerful people too, who chose to be shocked by such a notion, just as there are in these present times flag-waving patrioteers who, in the name of Jehovah and the Constitution, carry on successfully their campaign against appropriations for public libraries, public schools, and every other agency which operates, or could operate, for the enlightenment of the citizens. Let them write the Nation's laws, let them control all sources of public information, let them write the curricula, and they care not who may write its songs, or whether it has songs at all.

It is in the records of this Nation that public education has been from the first assumed as prerequisite for the success of the great experiment. The likelihood that the experiment will succeed can be read from day to day not in the market reports but in the figures that attest what progress we have made on any day in wiping out illiteracy. But literacy is something more than bare ability to recognize one's name in print or read the

headlines in the papers. The literacy report for one day might be read in part in figures on book sales and circulation. When shall we have a page in all the evening papers to quote the library demand for distinguished books?

Learning to read is at best a strenuous affair for most of us; but learning what to read, and what to do with what we read—this is a mystery so great that only a few will solve it. You patient teachers who teach reading in our schools, pouring freely into your work the precious essence of your life—what consolation do you use when, after all the effort and the pain involved, you see your pupils who have learned to read choose how they shall apply their fine achievement? What gives you courage for your work when you have read the publication figures for our newspapers and magazines? You teachers, whatever your subject, how do you justify yourself to yourself when there is so little evidence that America is making any progress in becoming either literate or democratic? You answer, of course, that you still have faith in an ideal, faith that this year, or next year, this generation or some generation following will achieve the discriminating literacy which will make democracy probable.

In several decades there has been no book more helpful in characterizing "the American dream" than James Truslow Adams's *The Epic of America*. In the epilogue Mr. Adams offers the opinion that the institution which best exemplifies that dream is "the greatest library in this land of libraries, the Library of Congress." It is not a personal memorial to some overrich man who sought belatedly to return to society a part of his plunder. It is straight from the heart of democracy. "Founded and built by the people, it is for the people." It is administered by a staff devoted to building here the greatest library in the world.

Then there is the public that uses these facilities. As one looks down on the general reading room, which alone contains ten thousand volumes which may be read without even the asking, one sees the

seats filled with silent readers, old and young, rich and poor, black and white, the executive and the laborer, the general and the private, the noted scholar and the schoolboy, all reading at their own library provided by their own democracy. It has always seemed to me to be a perfect working out in a concrete example of the American dream—the means provided by the accumulated resources of the people themselves, a public intelligent enough to use them, and men of high distinction, themselves a part of the great democracy, devoting themselves to the good of the whole, uncloistered.

The Library of Congress cannot serve all the people, of course, however its resources might be expanded, however efficient its staff. Mr. Adams offers it as a symbol of what democracy has achieved. For a vision of what there is yet to do we need only enter a public library in any large city where the shocked victims of the "depression" have crowded every room in their retreat, their frantic research for new illusions, new hopes, new opportunities to replace those lost in this bitter purge. They crowd every room, and they are made welcome and helped to a share of what is left of library service shaved to the bone by retrenchments that are shortsighted if not criminally unjust. "Give light and the people will find their own way!" But we the citizens, in this panic and confusion, have allowed the light to be turned down to a glimmer. Democracy assuredly must help itself. The great library at Washington will be a greater one when there are good libraries in every county of the western plains, in every mountain village, in every mining town. The library is a symbol of democracy; it shares with the hospital the right to be taken also as an index of humanity and essential civilization.

These ideas are offered here as a few of the basic ones assumed in all that may be said in the pages that follow about school libraries. The library in the school borrows much of its importance from the fact that it may offer boys and girls opportunities directly related to others they are likely to have as adults. As things are at present organized the public library is never an ade-

quate substitute for a school library. They are separate institutions, but their effectiveness depends upon such an integration of services that the student graduates from the school library into the public library before he completes the secondary grades. As the day arrives when *schooling* is not used as a synonym for *education*, it is possible that the public school and the public library, both functioning for identical ends, may be brought under one enlightened administration. This need not be the school administration; there is no reason to think that the school officials are more competent educators than the library officials.

The library is one aspect of the collectivistic society towards which Secretary Wallace and many others have predicted we shall move. But it is not intended that the individual nor his personal possessions for

use should be less important when the new society is proclaimed. When there are good libraries everywhere we shall still want books at home, books to own, books to cherish. The library at home, the personal collection of books, pictures, curios, and all the other useful and sentimental objects a cultured person accumulates—these attest the inspiration he has found in other libraries, private ones and public ones. Like other slogans, it offers only half a truth, but we propose as the ultimate slogan for libraries, "Every man his own librarian!" When all men can afford to own books, and when they can and dare to use books, we shall have discovered a fuller meaning for the word *literate*. The catacombs, once used for bones, are used today for seasoning wines.

JOHN CARR DUFF

The School of Education of New York University announces that during the summer session (July 8 to August 16) there will be offered again the course dealing with the school library. Dr. John Carr Duff is the instructor. The course has been revised to include the relatively new concept of school-museum service as a function of the school library. The new title of the course, as given in the summer-session bulletin, is "The School Library-Museum as Method." It is given for credit towards both the graduate and bachelor's degrees. School administrators as well as teachers and librarians should find the course pertinent to the solution of many problems related to organizing a school library and using effectively the various services that the library offers.

# The Librarian—Extracurricular Activities' Newest Ally

Harry C. McKown

CUBBERLEY's famous statement that "the most important individual in the school, next to the principal, is the janitor," has recently been joined by a paralleling statement that is just as true—"the most important individual in the school, next to the janitor, is the librarian." The janitor's activities in connection with the physical welfare of the pupil are probably no more important than the librarian's activities in connection with the pupil's mental welfare.

What a change has come in the office of the librarian! The old-time librarian, an umbrella-checking clerk and a "hander-out-of-books," a watchdog whose slogan was "every book in its place on the shelf," has been replaced by a sympathetic, enthusiastic, and ingenious education booster whose motto is "every book in the hands of a reader." This new official has accepted responsibility for, initiated, and developed all sorts of unusual activities in the interest of increased pupil education. Certainly here is an educator who is winning and deserving much credit and praise.

Not only has the librarian done yeoman service in connection with the usual curricular subjects but she has increasingly recognized the possibilities and busied herself with developing contacts, programs, and policies in connection with the so-called extracurricular activities, which brings us to the point of the present discussion. Just what can the library and its officials do to improve extracurricular activities and contribute to the education of the pupil through them?

In answer to this question the following definite suggestions are offered. It is not to be assumed that these activities are original with the writer or that they are not now be-

ing done in many schools. But it is reasonable to assume that not all of them are being done in all schools and perhaps in some schools few or none of them are being done. Consequently, these suggestions may be of value in assisting in the development of an improved program of library-activities coöperation.

In general, it is logical to believe that the librarian should be responsible for:

1. *Providing informational material for the various extracurricular activities.* In debating, because of its very nature, students have always made great use of the library. There is now more than ever before a possibility of similar wide use of these facilities in connection with material for assembly and homeroom programs, dramatic, music, and literary activities, school trips and excursions, welfare and service activities, etc. Note, for example, how the many details of social activities—parties, receptions, banquets, and hikes—relating to invitations, decorations, games, stunts, and refreshments, may be easily studied and planned where there is an adequately equipped library to draw upon. Even in cases where the librarian cannot supply exactly the material which the various groups may need, she can provide information concerning the sources of such material—books, publishers, manufacturers, and organizations from which it may be obtained.

2. *Coöperating with service clubs and committees of all types.* Such school organizations as the student council, Junior Red Cross, welfare, recreation, health, and other service committees and groups may, with the librarian's assistance, provide absentee and shut-in pupils—ill, quarantined, etc., as well



as underprivileged children—with books, magazines, pictures, newspapers, and similar materials. The planning and executing of scrapbooks, picture books, and clipping books (on specialized subjects such as radio, motion pictures, nature study, art, and music) constitute other projects which may be carried out with educational profit for all concerned.

3. *Promoting and managing exhibits.* The library, with its attractive equipment—chairs, tables, plants, flowers, pictures, good light, ample space, and interested personnel—is a much more pleasant and intriguing place than the average classroom. It is the logical place in which to hold exhibits of various kinds—magazines, newspapers, and other school publications—and the visible results and products of hobby, recreational, service, and other clubs—art, photograph, metal, scouts, handwork, radio, airplane, drawing, needlework, safety-first, poster, book lovers' gift, etc. Naturally, an essential part of such exhibits is the handling of the details of promotion, publicity, arrangement, and titling of all articles and the training and assignment of pupil guides, explainers, and helpers.

4. *Developing and maintaining a bulletin board.* An attractively designed, adequately lighted, and efficiently supervised bulletin board, located in the library rather than in some out-of-the-way place or in some traffic-crowded corridor, can be one of the most interesting things about the school or its library as well as one of the most valuable, from an educational point of view. Posters, clippings, suggestions, and announcements advertising new acquisitions, features, materials, services, and activities may be effectively presented by means of this device.

5. *Making the library's conference room available to student groups.* Many school libraries and nearly all public libraries are now equipped with a "conference room," "directors' room," or a similar room which may profitably be made available for the use of student groups. Consider, for instance,

how the very atmosphere of such a meeting place, with its highly polished table and its attractive chairs, would give an importance and dignity to the deliberations of the student council or some pupil committee which would never be possible if the group were meeting in a classroom with the usual classroom atmosphere.

6. *Accepting responsibility for promoting a very definite consideration of commonly neglected current life activities.* Although the activities of real life are being increasingly represented in regular school settings, many of these items are not found in the school's set-up because they do not fit in well with established courses and subjects. Hence, they are "extracurricular" activities in a real but not in the usual sense. Many of them can be reflected in the programs and discussions of the homeroom, assembly, and other groups. The librarian can very appropriately initiate the development of interest in them. To illustrate briefly, four of these possibilities follow.

All pupils attend the movies and yet little is being done to raise the pupil's standards of movie attendance. A number of reputable magazines now include a motion-picture department and the reviews in these can be made available to the pupils. A "movie-guide" scrapbook composed of these reviews and made by the pupils themselves will be well worth while. An analysis of the asinine advertising, both direct and indirect, to be found in current newspapers would be helpful, as would a study of the silly froth to be found in the typical movie magazines—the private lives, pajamas, pets, early struggles, childhood, adventures, hobbies, and "loves" (all told in a breathless manner) of motion-picture heroes and heroines. In addition, there are several good books on this topic available and these could be supplied by the librarian.

A similar study could be made of the radio programs, materials, methods of broadcasting, etc., as well, of course, as of the intelligence-insulting "blah" commonly

called "advertising" inevitably found in nearly all of these programs.

Another activity which the library can assist in promoting is the intelligent reading of current newspapers. A discussion of the newspaper as a financial institution, with its consequent policy or distortion, misemphasis, and bias in national, international, political, religious, educational, financial, and other human concerns, can be built upon a study of newspaper organization, support, class of readers, types, proportions, and display of news stories, etc. Here again not only can the librarian supply the papers but also a number of appropriate books which can be used in supplementing pupil study and investigation.

Still another educationally (and financially) valuable project may center around advertising of all types—newspaper, magazine, radio, billboard, "whispering campaign," handbill, and mail. For instance, why should not the school teach the pupils to be careful about investing in magic "salary raisers," "systems of training," "memory developers," "personality producers," "fat reducers," and a hundred other thoroughly discredited services which benefit only the advertisers? And here again the librarian can supply books and pamphlets, the publications of the United States Government and Consumers' Research, and similar material which will not only be interesting but authentic.

To repeat, the librarian can easily, naturally, and effectively assume charge of important educations for which little provision is now being made in the average school.

7. *Developing and utilizing pupil-assistants.* Many schools have established an intelligently thought-out and definitely organized policy and practice of training and utilizing pupil-assistant librarians. Probably, in many instances, these arrangements have been made largely on the basis of economy, but in many other cases they have been made as a part of a definitely planned program of pupil education. Probably, in both cases, the general results have been beneficial.

Certainly there is as much justification for the organization of a library squad as for the organization of a traffic squad, office squad, or cafeteria squad. The educational possibilities are surely none the less important. These assistant librarians help in cataloguing, classifying, accessioning, arranging, charging, discharging, shelving, and repairing books and periodicals, in maintaining clipping and picture files, in giving desirable publicity to library materials and methods, and in other services and activities.

8. *Promoting intelligent use of the library.* Judging by the extent to which pupils of a modern school use the library it may appear that an educational program designed to encourage such use is unnecessary. However, this is not the case. A continuous program of education is necessary not only to encourage the newer pupils to make use of the library and its opportunities intelligently, but also to educate all pupils on what it contains, its new acquisitions and services, how efficiently to find what is wanted, and in the proper care of books, magazines, and other material.

This education may be provided through the assembly, homeroom, club, or other program; by means of playlets, pantomimes, pageants, and other dramatizations; the publication of reviews and similar material in the school and local newspaper, and on the bulletin board; by such devices as charades, games, conundrums, songs, jingles, and contests relating to authors, titles, characters, scenes, settings, and events; and by the promotion of special drives, "Library Week," "Read Week," "Visit the Library Week," and others.

Who shall have the responsibility for initiating and developing this program of library-activity coöperation, the librarian or the sponsor? Probably, in general, the latter, because he is somewhat of an expert in the field of activities, knows the aims, purposes, materials, and methods, and is more experienced with them than is the librarian.

Hence it is logical to assume that he should recognize and accept the responsibility for pointing out the various possibilities to the librarian and for making suggestions for coöperative effort. In short, he must lead the librarian to see the opportunities, educate her concerning the ideals and materials of the activity program, and with her devise a program aimed at accomplishing desirable ends.

Of course, it must not be assumed for a moment that this education will be a difficult task. The modern librarian is extremely desirous of extending the influence of the library, she has the highest of professional ideals, usually has had good training, and

is a "horse" for work. She will be quick to appreciate and capitalize her opportunities.

However, all of the coöperating will not be on her part. It is just as essential that the activity sponsor or director and the students be as quick to appreciate their responsibilities in coöperating with her and in promoting the interests of the library as it is for her to be quick in promoting the interests of the activities. This task is a mutually coöperative one. No one can doubt but that it will be extremely valuable in the improvement of the activities and the library, which in themselves are important enough, but also in the education of the pupils, which is far more important.

## School Library

*By* GERALD RAFTERY

This room is far more rich than all the rest  
In dreams and wisdom, here where volumes stand  
In staid array with wealth from every land  
And every golden age; this room is best.  
Here is the hidden East, the roaring West,  
With tales for any youngster's reaching hand;  
Here History lies open to be scanned  
For fun—or for a crucial monthly test.

Here Michael Strogoff races through the snow,  
And Crusoe tells of all the deeds he did,  
And three gay musketeers match laugh and blow.  
Here Don Quixote rides beside the Cid,  
And Little Women, Beth and Meg and Jo,  
Consort with Billy Bones and Captain Kidd.

# Library Service in Rural Schools

Sarah B. Askew

*Secretary, New Jersey Public Library Commission*

**I**N NEW JERSEY we feel that the solution of library service to rural schools can come only through county or township libraries. During the survey made by the Governor's committee in New Jersey in the past few years one of the people with the survey came to my office to ask why there were not county libraries in all counties, as the library service for the rural and small town schools was so much more efficient and adequate in those counties with such libraries.

Two decades ago almost all rural schools both elementary and secondary in our State suffered from a lack of library service. Not only did they suffer for books but for advice on books and reading, for reference and information service such as is given by the public library.

The county superintendents, helping teachers, and parent teachers saw the crying need for library service for schools and realized that the lack of books and such service was at the root of one of the most radical faults of our school system—the children were not being trained in comprehension and trained to examine and learn for themselves. With great effort many of the rural schools procured sufficient money to put in small book collections and the rural high schools added reference books. The small collections the schools were able to buy were soon read and there were many gaps in the reference collections which should have been filled by circulating books. The schools had no trained service for reference and information; there was little supervision of book buying; books stood unused in one school when needed in another; and there was much duplication. At last the school people of one county put it up to the Public Library Commission to find some better way

of conducting this library service. The county library grew out of that request.

The county library has its headquarters at the county seat and has there a collection of books from which the circulating collections are drawn and from which special books may be supplied and which enables the librarian to work out reference problems. In addition, books are placed in every school and community in the county, accessible to all and changed at frequent intervals.

The idea is to give each of the schools a collection chosen by the teachers, helping teachers, and county librarians, and to have this collection a flexible one to be adjusted to the needs of the school as they develop. In addition it is planned to give them a constant supply of fresh books, a central supply station from which to draw for the special book wanted from time to time, and for information and reference service a trained person to whom the teachers and pupils may turn and who will guide and direct the recreational reading in an unobstructive diplomatic way.

It is planned to give the high school a good collection of reference books to be supplemented from time to time by circulating books. Our State regulations require that there shall always be kept in the high school not less than five hundred volumes. In addition it is planned to give the rural high school the services of a well-trained specialist to supervise and aid their own librarians, to help with special problems that may arise, and to give them the reference and information service which every high school needs, as well as a constant supply of fresh books for cultural and special reading.

The children need to be taught to se-

lect books for themselves and need a larger collection from which to select than can be provided in any one school; therefore, the county library has a car which calls about once a month. It is so built that it carries on shelves five hundred or more books from which the children may select their own supply. Inside are carried special books for teachers and pupils.

In fact, the goal is that each school shall have a collection of books, each book being chosen by the teacher and the librarian for the particular needs of that school. Certain reference books shall always be left in each school and each school can keep a book as long as necessary; but through the exchange system books that are no longer in use will be taken by the librarian when she calls and new ones left in their place. The librarian talks with the teachers and helps plan the work in reference to books and brings each month the books needed for the work of that school. She talks with the pupils, tells them stories, helps compile reading lists, and trains them in the use of books. The pupils and teachers select books from the car as they wish. She works in the closest accord with the helping teachers, keeps them supplied with books they need, keeps them advised as to new books that are of use, and sees that the teachers carry out, so far as books are concerned, projects planned for them. She supplies books and ideas for entertainment. When the wants of the school are satisfied as far as possible the librarian moves on taking with her many requests to be filled by mail and reference questions to be looked up. The librarian often gives elementary instruction in the use of books and libraries to the eighth grade and also to the older children in charge of libraries in their homerooms.

On the school's side, the principal generally appoints one of the older children as head librarian, this office being changed from time to time so that all of the pupils having interest along these lines may serve. This pupil takes general charge of requests and

book exchanges. Each room has its own librarian who looks after the books in the room and this office is also changed to give each child an opportunity. In small country schools the older children have sometimes built the shelves in the rooms and they take pride in saying that they built these shelves from directions in a book, showing the visitor the book and the plans for shelving. The girls sometimes do simple mending as their contribution. The library rooms are decorated with posters made by the pupils and they take pride in showing nature collections, stamp collections, articles made and models built from books on nature and handicraft. As each child finishes the book he or she has chosen, it is turned into the general collection for the room; therefore, each child is interested in every book selected from the truck and much advice is given back and forth. The "permanent" collection of reference books is always kept accessible and often a room contrives to have a reading table or so at the back with some books spread out on it. The librarian tries to have one really beautiful book in each room. When one room has tired of its circulating books it often changes titles with another room. Occasionally where there is room the books are transferred back and forth to a central collection in the school. The books the teacher is using on a project stand readily accessible by her desk so the children may refer to them from time to time. In some schools the books the children have selected from the car are used instead of readers and it is found that silent reading has greatly improved in a number of instances where this is done and some slow readers have gained speed. The children write for books or write comments on books for a writing project so the library becomes a center of school life.

The library car visits the high school as well as the other schools. In the rural high school the problem was even more difficult than the elementary school, for while the school might buy the reference books it was



difficult for it to add sufficient books on cultural lines for collateral and supplementary or even for required reading. Generally one period of a teacher's time was given to this work. To the rural high schools the county library has added more reference books and has given them a constantly changing group of books for cultural reading, as well as additional books on the course of study and extracurricular activities. The car calls at regular intervals at the high school as older children desire still more to have a selection among books for something to read. This selection gives them judgment and interest in the books.

Some few of the books are put in class libraries but an endeavor is made to keep the collection in some central place planned with the aid of the county librarian. The teacher in charge is given a measure of library training by the county librarian and an effort is made to get her to meet State requirements by acquiring the credits in library work necessary for a teacher-librarian certificate. She devotes as much time as possible to the library, the period differing according to the number of pupils in the school. In some counties once a year the county librarians have a class for the more interested and promising high-school pupils. These pupils aid in looking after the library and often take up library work as a result.

Special service is given to the high schools for debates and essays as well as for entertainments and pupil activities. These pupils show art work, manual training, handicraft, and collections made through the use of

these books and say the library has made these things possible. The school's part is to furnish a pleasant room for a central library, contributions towards the reference books, a supply of magazines, part of a teacher's time, and assignment of pupils to aid in the work.

The books are chosen by the librarian with the aid of the principal and the teachers, and you may be sure if there is any pet book of the teachers she does not insist that the one she leans towards be taken, but sees that the teacher or the pupil gets the book that is wanted when it is wanted, if it is possible to do it.

To do all of this work libraries in the rural districts, those in municipalities, the county libraries, and the Public Library Commission have been tied together so that when a book is wanted in one place for some special work it may be borrowed, when pictures are wanted they will be loaned, the difficult reference question will be looked up in the university or State library.

The rural schools have a great advantage in that they have real projects right at hand and there is not so much outside diversion, but the difficulty has been to give them adequate book and library service for the pupils to learn to study and think for themselves. With this exchange system with a trained person at the head, the rural school is being, in some instances, better served than the urban school, and the boys and girls, because they share in the work, are taking more interest. It certainly makes every dollar spent count as much as two formerly counted in book service.

# When the Right Hand Knoweth

Mary E. Foster

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IN COMMUNITIES where they both exist, the two tax-supporting institutions—the public school and the public library—have a unique opportunity for coöperation to produce an economical book service to school pupils. There are fine examples of this service throughout the country, notably in cities and in counties where forward-looking school boards and public-library boards have allocated responsibilities and shared expenses which result in a mutual respect for each other's problems and ideals.

The depression in too many communities cast the library from the school program, or if it were maintained there were lessened book funds, or perhaps no money at all, to keep the book collection even at its predepression standard. This leaves many libraries with books in such bad condition from hard use that it will take years to rebuild unless money flows at greater speed than in the past. This is one serious problem we are facing.

The second problem which confronts public educators is that of standards in the selection of school librarians. Far too many school administrators are satisfied to have a teacher with little or no library training placed in their school library. For the same money, a trained librarian can be obtained who will bring to the situation her skill as an organizer of books, as a buyer of books, and as a book enthusiast. An administrator will see that his chemistry teacher is trained; he will not place a musician, who cannot teach manual training, in his woodwork shop; yet many school men feel that any one will do in the school library. This is indeed a shortsighted policy.

Now how can a coöperating plan between

the school and the public library be of especial assistance in these really basic problems which confront school libraries today? Naturally the division of expenses for the maintenance of the library is of first consideration. What shall be the contributions of the school board, what those of the public library? Perhaps this can be most readily visualized by a statement of the respective responsibilities of the board of education and the library board in the city with which the writer is most familiar.

Under this coöperative plan, the board of education provides space and equipment for all high-school and elementary-school libraries. It pays the salaries of the librarian and the library teachers on the regular teacher-salary scale; it pays the public library for binding and cataloguing books paid for by the board; it provides nonlibrary supplies; it transfers temporary loan books to the elementary schools; and it allots money for the purchase of books for both high-school and elementary-school libraries. The public library maintains a school's department with a staff of seven members, three of whom are trained librarians; provides money for a pool collection of books for school use, also for high-school library purchase of books; ensures weekly delivery to all high-school libraries; provides library supplies; supervises the school libraries for the board of education, acting as a clearing house between the two organizations; and makes available for school use on a temporary loan basis the adult circulating collection housed in the main building.

These two organizations adjust the problems mentioned above; namely, adequate money for book purchases and a properly

trained staff in the following ways. Cuts in book funds have been in order, which necessitated a careful study of statistics resulting in a percentage allotment of total funds based on school population, book collections, circulation, and attendance. Book purchases from both public-library and board of education funds have gone forward. Books for high-school libraries are ordered each month at a meeting in the schools department at the public library where copies of books asked for by the librarians are on display for examination, after careful review by the library specialists, thus eliminating the mediocre and bringing only the best to the attention of the group. This avoids purchasing sight unseen and aids vastly the wise expenditure of funds. The pool collection in the schools department and the borrowing from the main adult lending collection supplied 7,553 requests from 21 high-school libraries during 1934. This involved the shipping of many more thousands of books, because one request may read "Books on the Revolutionary War period for a class of forty" or "Ninety biographies on the ninth-grade reading list." During this year, the 95 elementary-school libraries sent 11,121 requests for additional temporary loans. So the depression continues, but the book collections hold their own, are kept rebound, the worn-outs replaced, and the best of the new titles added, and expert library service is continued for all students.

As a by-product of this phase of the work, a condition prevails in the matter of book agents selling sets of books. When beset by these supersalesmen, the board of education representatives refer the bookmen to the schools department. The books are left for examination, estimates are found, comparison is made with approved material already in use in the schools, and in many cases much money is saved for more desirable book purchases.

By placing books and book funds first in the list of problems, the cart is before the

horse, for the finest book collection available, with a librarian who does not know her books, who has no library training to enable her to prepare and administer them, is a liability of great magnitude. It was necessary to arrive at a personnel basis for incoming librarians. The State demands a teacher's certificate. Four years of academic college work, to place the librarian in background knowledge on a par with the teachers who work with her, is required and a one-year library-school course with its resultant certificate. Three years' experience as a teacher, or a librarian, a pleasing personality, good physique, a wide reading background, tactfulness, a sense of social responsibility, and keen interest in school problems and pupils are all sought in applicants who are examined for placement. Integration between public library and school board in this matter is augmented by the libraries' knowledge of library personnel, by its coöperation in supplying experience, and by its insistence on the professional training of applicants. The educator's desire for teaching background and ability is equally just, so both organizations have voiced their desires and the resultant standards satisfy.

Another matter of importance is the planning of equipment and floor space for old and new libraries. The architect calls in for consultation the head of the schools department when libraries are to be planned or remodeled. The artistic and the practical are both considered in the completed plans.

After considering these basic problems, there are yet many opportunities in coöperation for these two public educators. Such an interlocking organization provides a mutual understanding of problems. When the yearly reading list for teachers is compiled, the public library is called on through the schools department for suggestions, the public library then ordering additional copies of these books to meet the increased demands from the teachers. If an addition to the required high-school reading list is in contemplation, the books are assembled in the

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schools department for committee use. When it is time to choose the yearly purchase of books for the elementary-school libraries, a survey of the most useful and beautiful children's books purchased by the public library form the basis of selection; if a national or State convention is to be held, lists are compiled and books provided to illustrate schoolwork exhibited. These and innumerable other services occur with each changing school year. Backward children, mental deviates, undernourished, normal and superior, all these become more vitally interesting to the public library because they are seen through the eyes of the school as

a challenge, and as problems in which the public is to have an opportunity to serve through its tie-up with the schools.

Here through the school library is an opportunity for each great educating body to see into the future. Surely the fine library training received by the pupils in the school libraries will bear fruit in adult appreciation of public-library service. Shall we not anticipate a good percentage of students continuing to use the public library for mental growth after school life, and, after all, is not that stimulation of a desire for continued learning the greatest contribution the school can make?

### School Credit for Library Assistants

I am one of the library assistants and have been asked to write about my work. I chose library work instead of algebra because I am not very good in mathematics. There are four other students who are library assistants, two boys and two girls. If we do our work well and get the recommendation of the librarian, we will receive credit towards our graduation next year. Some of the assistants will receive one half of a unit credit and others will receive a whole unit credit. I shall receive a whole unit because I put in extra time after school. I like the library work very much because it is so different from the other courses that I have. Also, it

gives you a chance to learn many things about books. For instance, I know now which are the best books to read, and whenever I want to read a book, I know just which one to get. I read a great deal now, but before I was a library assistant I did not read very much. I like the library work because it gives you some responsibility and makes you feel that you are doing something worth while. That is why I have practically decided to be a librarian and am preparing myself to enter the normal school as soon as I graduate. I shall try to be a librarian in an elementary school because I like to work with small children.

# The Evaluation of School Library Service

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THE PROBLEM of measuring the efficiency of the school library is surrounded by the same difficulties encountered in evaluating the achievement of all educational agencies. One can easily tell whether or not a business activity is succeeding by studying the balance sheet. In the absence of any such satisfactory means of measuring the outcomes of library service, it has been the practice to set up standards in which the value of the library is completely overshadowed by such items as housing, equipment, annual maintenance appropriation, and qualifications of the librarian. These standards describe the material organization of the library, but they do not enable us to judge the effectiveness of the library service.

It is the purpose of this article to suggest a number of principles which may be used as a basis for evaluating the library in terms of the service which it renders.

1. Library service should be an integral part of the instructional program contributing directly to the aims of the school. The National Survey of Secondary Education<sup>1</sup> lists seven functions of the library reported by principals, teacher-librarians, and librarians: "To enrich curriculum and supply reference material, to provide for worthy use of leisure time, to train pupils in the use of books and the library, to serve as a centralizing agency for the school, to train for character, to serve teachers, and to assist in the guidance program of the school."

The library must be a stimulator of intellectual activity, rather than a mere rewarder of those who do outstanding work. It must provide the atmosphere in which students

will find new incentives to achievement. There must be on every hand the influences which will complement the classroom, and enrich and vitalize its work, a requirement made imperative by progressive instructional methods. Thus the library is not only a place to do collateral reading or look up assigned references, it is a friendly agency which integrates the various functions of the school.

The hospitable, coöperative atmosphere of the library should provide an important "culture medium" in which the germs of true social control may flourish. Fargo<sup>2</sup> suggests the following objectives of socialized organization of the library: "To create interest in the library, to develop a helpful social atmosphere, to provide social and ethical training, to free the librarian, and to aid in the choice of librarianship as a vocation."

2. Teachers should utilize the library, not only in the instruction of pupils, but also in their own cultural and professional development. Library service provides an indirect method of improving instruction which is often more effective than direct supervisory techniques.

The use of the library by teachers will depend in a large measure on the program carried out by the librarian. She must not only have clearly in mind the objectives for her own work, she must be sure that teachers, supervisors, and administrators have a definite understanding of their responsibilities as they relate to the library. Hicks<sup>3</sup> lists an excellent set of library objectives appro-

<sup>1</sup> Lucile F. Fargo, *The Library in the School* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1933).

<sup>2</sup> Howard H. Hicks, *The Junior High School Library*, School Library Yearbook Number Five (Chicago: American Library Association, 1932).

<sup>3</sup> B. Lamar Johnson, *The Secondary School Library* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Education Bulletin No. 17, Monograph No. 17, 1932), p. 7, ¶15.



appropriate to the junior high school. Among the more important are the following. For librarians: "To foster an appreciation of the library as a laboratory for research and exploration, to provide library experiences that result in growth of the power to interpret and evaluate the printed page, to make the library an agent for curriculum enrichment, and to understand the problems of classroom instruction that the library may aid the teacher in both formal and activity work." For teachers: "To be acquainted with the content of the library in relation to the subject taught, to use the library as a means of unifying and integrating subject matter, and to encourage the child to explore beyond the limits of formal assignments." For supervisors and administrators: "To understand the relation of the library to various teaching situations, to promote coöperation between classroom teachers and library staff, to establish administrative and supervisory controls that encourage library usage, and to consider the teacher's interest in the library as a factor in evaluating her services."

Techniques which librarians in progressive schools are employing to widen the use of the library in connection with regular classes are cited by the National Survey of Secondary Education.<sup>4</sup> The most commonly used device is to have the librarian supply teachers with bibliographies of material available in the library for various units of work. Others reported less frequently are: "Keeping in touch with units being studied in various classes, visiting classes, and becoming familiar with every course of study."

3. Pupils should know the techniques for effective use of the library and enjoy showing initiative and independence in applying these techniques. This objective implies more than a mere formal training in the various tools of library usage. Boys and girls may be able to manipulate the card catalogue, yet they may be utterly helpless when face to face with a problem involving

the operation of the catalogue. One of the biggest contributions which the library has to make is to help boys and girls stand on their own feet. The knowledge of library techniques should enable each individual to do independent work, and to know how to attack problems which arise in connection with school activities.

4. An effective library program induces pupils to use the library voluntarily in solving their own problems, particularly those which arise out of school. When pupils turn to the library of their own accord to find solutions to their own personal problems and interests we may be sure that the library is really functioning, at least in one vital aspect. For example, the boy who has confidence in the library will go there to find new material and other helps in connection with his hobby interests.

5. The library should so influence those whom it serves as to further the ideal of education as an informal activity which the individual carries on through life. Among other things, this involves a definite program for introducing boys and girls to the use of public libraries and other educational facilities for adults.

There are many school library activities which may lead to this end. Every pupil should be encouraged to use the library extensively for general cultural reading and for the pursuit of lasting interests which may be a source of constant satisfaction and enjoyment. Reading habits, acquired in the school library, will serve as a solid foundation upon which each one may continue to grow educationally.

No school or formal program can prepare the student during his childhood, adolescent, and early adult years to meet all of the situations he will face in later life. He is truly educated only as he becomes master of the art of continuously readapting himself to a rapidly changing environment. An important part of the technique of doing this is the ability to use efficiently public libraries and other adult agencies.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*

# "Free" Teaching Through the School Library

Richard James Hurley

*Librarian, Junior-Senior High School, Roslyn, N.Y.*

THERE ARE school libraries—and school libraries. In physical elements they range from the palatial expansiveness of the DeWitt Clinton School in New York to a shelf of dog-eared volumes in a rural school in North Dakota. In personnel we find a corresponding wide variation, and again in the philosophy and theory upon which the school library functions. But there is one constant in this matrix of variables—the book. And in this book we find a common meeting ground for the interests of all the school community—the students, the teachers, and the librarian. The book is an ice-breaker, an introduction, an informal give-and-take sort of thing that provides a clue to the inner person. The interchange of experiences and feelings that results is of creative educational value to all parties concerned with the guiding of the adolescent.

The place where these books are housed therefore becomes a very special one—a place for sympathetic interest, confidences, and personal help. For the library is not a classroom; it has no desks, no assignments, no recitations, and, let us hope, no roll taking. Instead we find tables and chairs where friends can work together, books and magazines suited to the myriad tastes of curiosity-minded youngsters. There are files of pictures and graphic materials, displays of student craft, collections and hobby projects, perhaps athletic trophies, and all the exciting interests that "creative" librarians can conjure up. In the library flows the stream of school activity; here the pulse of the school can be felt—because of its informal situation in the structure of the school organization.

Likewise, the librarian is a very special person. He assigns no lessons, corrects no papers, gives no grades. He meets all the pupils in an environment of mutual interests; moves among them as a counsellor and guide, helping here, suggesting there, commenting and criticizing constructively. It is "free" teaching—freedom to watch, to suggest, to experiment, to draw out some and repress others, to round off rough corners. Not being a taskmaster such as the teacher must necessarily be, the librarian can be one of these delightful people who always have something pleasant up their sleeve—a new book, a new picture, a new idea.

At the same time the librarian is in touch with those currents that dominate the philosophy and techniques of the faculty. His efforts to unify the many phases of the curriculum gives him a comprehensive point of view. To this "feel" of the students and the faculty is added a knowledge of the community life and home life of the students. In the library where he can get into the inner nature of these coming citizens, he can carry forward the work of adjusting them to their complex world—and after all that is the main purpose of education.

Here is Harry for instance, a boy interested in insects and with intentions of becoming a biologist. In the classroom he may be just another student with average grades in English and science and mathematics. In the library he buries himself in the contents of his hobby, for which the librarian provides as much and as vital printed materials as are available, pointing out other phases of entomology and ending up by displaying Harry's collection.

Another type of boy of an imaginative strain, Ellis, by chance became interested in "life" on Mars. He ransacked the library for every bit of material on this controversial planet, balanced opinions, confounded his schoolmates, and questioned his favorite teachers to the point of becoming a nuisance; but his interests broadened from mystery and adventure books to astronomy, geology, and travel. Then there is always that girl who delights in beautiful illustrations and fine bookwork—the kind of girl whom you enlist for your library council where she can influence others with her love of books. This is education of the most deeply personal kind.

Besides these happy, incidental meetings there are other means of contact, mainly the student organizations and community youth groups. In the former are usually athletic teams, music, drama, journalism, and science groups. In the latter are Boy and Girl Scouts, the Y.M.C.A., Hungry Clubs, DeMolay, Audubon, and many others. In all of these groups the interests are fairly well defined and much personal exploration not necessary. Therefore, books and talks on their special interests can be readily relied upon to provide a mutual ground for later individual work—wherein lies the rapport necessary for informal education. In all of this work, whether with groups or with individuals, the librarian and teacher should freely interchange observations of students' likes and dislikes.

There has been implied in this education of the "whole" person a knowledge of books. There is another step to be considered—how to use them. It is not enough to build up real interests and creative leisure-time activities; we must provide methods for doing independent research. These enthusiasts should know some criteria of book selection, the content features of a book and how to use them, the mysteries of the card catalogue, of special reference books pertinent to them, of encyclopedias and dictionaries, of the arrangement of books on the

shelf, of special features in the library as the clipping, picture, and pamphlet files or special book collections. This training in the use of books should enable the student to explore to the fullest the resources of the school, public, and his home library. I have watched with dismay the way Paul, a "microbe" enthusiast, swept through all the available material and, with almost the desperation of a drug addict, demanded more. These intense people who will become leaders in our culture of tomorrow require "meat" to feed upon. One of the finest things we can do, outside of discovering and giving direction to talent, is to set the spirit free to wander in its own heaven.

In the past we have endeavored to train students by prepared library lessons given in some systematic way. There are a dozen and more manuals on the market from the simple Gaylord booklet to the elaborate *Library Key* by Zaidee Brown. There are work sheets and ingenious tests of all kinds devised. There is no reason why the careful work that has gone into some of these manuals should not prove valuable after proper selection for local needs. We recognize certain needs at certain levels and the necessity of presenting the same material in various ways to groups of different I.Q.'s. There are many good reasons why parts of these manuals should be used—the teaching load, the overcrowding of schools, necessity of adaptation in many ways. But any effort to make the library a "classroom" with "lessons" and "assignments" and with the librarian as "teacher" is to take the fun and thrill out of the library and make it just another room. With a game element introduced into this training, with an informal handling of the content, and with a very real tie-up with the interests at hand, it is possible to follow these manuals in some respects, but at best they are still makeshift. The ideal situation is, of course, to have a librarian Mark Hopkins at one side of the book and the pupil at the other. Or better yet to have both the teacher and the librarian

in company with the single student.

For the proper integration and correlation of library instruction with the curriculum it is therefore advisable to be prepared for the worst and expect the best—something that may be done at any time, with two or twenty, in the library or classroom and with special reference to the needs that prompted both the teacher and librarian to enrich the students' experiences. Then our library instruction becomes more than factual material; it becomes clues in a thrilling treasure hunt and makes the library and its books living things. Finally to go beyond the goals

to actual outcomes so that the library expresses through its collections, exhibits, projects, and "museum" aspects the fruits of all this combined activity.

I would say that we must forget learning things and forget schooling and think more about human nature, the guidance of individual differences, and growth of creative personality. The teacher and librarian by using this informal medium of education provided by the school library can contribute much towards the enrichment that makes for a full life.

### The Librarian Went Swimming

I belong to the library club. Our sponsor is not the librarian, for she is the sponsor of the swimming club. Our sponsor is Miss Hopkins. She is the eighth-grade English teacher. Our club meets during the club period every week and sometimes we have an extra meeting after school. Our club is now mounting pictures for the library file. Our librarian leaves us the pictures that she wants to file and the mounting paper. We select the mounting paper that would go best with the picture. Then we trim the picture neatly and mount it in place. We let the picture dry under a pile of books so that it will be flat. The librarian puts the picture in the picture file under the heading where it belongs.

Most of the pictures that we mount are covers from *The Literary Digest*. We also mount many pictures from *The Ladies' Home Journal* and some from the *Pictorial Review*. These pictures are used in many ways in our school. Some of them are used by the history teacher because they are about historical scenes. Some of them are used by the art teacher. Sometimes in art class when we have a lesson about art appreciation, the teacher will show us some of the prints that our club has mounted for the file. I am very proud of our work because it helps the school. I love to mount pictures, and I am making a picture file of my own at home.

# Librarian Tells All

Victoria Mansfield

*Librarian, Junior-Senior High School, Garfield Heights, Ohio*

EFFICIENT CITIZENSHIP today is based largely on reading and judging the printed page. Training in such activity must be an extensive laboratory course, and the laboratory must be the school library.

Dr. Johnson's monograph<sup>1</sup> discouraged us who are primarily interested in this phase of the high school; if inadequate facilities, inadequate staff, and lack of coöperation hamper the work in the schools selected because they have outstanding libraries, what about the thousands where there never has been one, or where it has been neatly sheared off as a "frill"?

Librarians might be held responsible for a program to improve service, but administrators alone have the power to create the department. Only superintendents and principals are in a position to show boards of education that a library must be an integral part of any school plant and annual budget.

Too many projects read like a collaboration of George Ade and Mrs. Pennyfeather. How the New Teacher Launched the Good Ship Books—An enthusiastic member of the English Department happened to Find a vacant Room; she solicited Gift books to be Catalogued by a Club; she discovered a Horse Stall to be made into Shelves by the shops; presto! Our school now has a Library without a Single cent of Expenditures.

No library can function without the backing of a superintendent who convinces the board that more stimulating teaching and more efficient learning cannot be expected until teachers and students have access to a supply of standard supplementary books. The book collection cannot be made up of

sample texts and subscription sets of the wild animals of Africa. Here again the trained administrator leads the board to understand that this enterprise demands professional technique. If the enthusiastic teacher happens to be a trained librarian with a vision of library opportunity, the superintendent or principal can let her launch the library as an assignment, not as an extracurricular interest.

And it's not the cost; it's the upkeep. From wide questioning it has been calculated that the annual loss in a secondary-school library should not quite equal an average daily circulation. Two thirds of these losses occur in subjects where books at suitable reading levels are scarce and where duplication has not been made in quantity. Here again it is the superintendent who must explain to a board—possibly hard to convince—that the book order must contain a dozen volumes on wrestling because the three purchased last year have been stolen. The rest of his talk on the annual budget may be slightly more palatable as it covers routine matters such as periodicals, expanding curriculum needs, binding, and replacements. It must all be accepted, however, if the library remains an efficient unit.

An article in *School Review* for May 1933, by Elwood Adams, reported a study which proved that neither the size of the collection nor the equipment of the room has much to do with the amount of reading done by junior-high pupils. If the librarian is a trained worker, and if there are provisions for free reading, students read widely. The principal has the responsibility for a schedule that indicates his sincere interest in directed and free reading.

An article of this kind cannot presume to

<sup>1</sup> B. Lamar Johnson, *The Secondary School Library*, (Washington, D.C.: Office of Education. Bulletin No. 17, Monograph No. 17, 1932), \$.15.



become a course in library administration; devices to make the library-mindedness of the school felt must suggest themselves to fit the situation, but the prime need is this condition: from the superintendent down there must come the constant implication that reading is something to be done as a civic duty—not merely for an assignment, or for recreation, or for preparation of graceful conversation, but as a means of solving any problem in hand, be it serious or frivolous.

The classroom teacher who knows children's literature at her teaching level stimulates her pupils to read. She makes her needs known to the trained librarian; she then arouses curiosity about the offerings available to the students. Normal schools have added courses in—not about—children's reading in the last five years, but colleges lag; they still give most of their work in the Beaver School of American Poetry, so to speak, heedless of hundreds of worthy modern books that are making literary and cultural history. The nonliterary subjects have an expanding stock of readable material with which teachers must familiarize themselves. The librarian is something of a specialist-at-large but cannot know the innumerable points in a class situation from which expanding interests can grow if the seed is planted. The superintendent is justified in impressing principals and supervisors with the validity of testing a teacher's aptitude for her work by her ability to inspire her pupils to use books as tools.

The desired outgrowth of school-library habits is familiar, happy use of books in continued education—formal or self-directed.

The peak of omniverous reading comes in the junior-high-school years, slanting off as curriculum pressure and extracurricular activities absorb more of the student's time. However, if the potential reader is immersed in suitable material during the time he is genuinely interested, there is the possibility that he will return to reading for recreation and self-education when his activities lessen; if he has never read widely, he will not begin after high-school days.

The great loss among readers is between high-school and public-library attendance. All who believe that habitual reading is a requisite for efficient modern living have tried to hold those lines of interest that seemed strongest in pupils during the later high-school days; still the leak persists—in fact it drains off the main current and leaves a great unsolved problem; in what way can regular readers at high-school graduation be influenced so they will become continuous, self-motivated, intelligent adult users of library facilities?

One no longer tries to sell the idea of the need for free reading; studies galore prove that those who can get a lot to read through public agencies read a lot; that those who can get practically nothing read practically nothing and fail to comprehend that little. We know that the library is bound up inextricably with the modern curriculum. We are trying to prove that, to become a power in the entire life of students, the library must be a full-time department, established with faith and supported with unfaltering loyalty by the board, the administration, and the staff.

# Experimental Museum-Exhibition Work for Children

J. Meksin

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ABOUT EIGHT years ago a small group of extramural educators in Moscow took up the organization of exhibitions for children. At that time we possessed neither a clear-cut plan nor the necessary premises and means for running exhibitions. At the same time we were rather impatient in our eagerness to start the work.

We were actuated by the profound conviction that ordinary museums are little adapted to serve the juvenile visitor. As a rule, they are too bulky and crowded. This may be due partly to the fact that the majority of museums are made up from former royal or private collections which are at times simply piled one on top of the other and partly to the excessive effort of some museum workers for external grandeur, as well as to the legitimate desire of specialists to have each object represented with exhaustive fullness.

However, what suits the educated person may overtax the ability of the uneducated, especially of the juvenile visitor. In setting out upon our work we made it a hard and fast rule for ourselves to be contented with a minimal quantity of objects, to eliminate the superfluous. This was not making a virtue of a necessity; it was our basic principle to strive for brevity and expressiveness.

Heretofore museums used to group things upon the principle of rigid classification and systematization, which blunted and could not for long hold one's attention. Therefore, we made it our rule to avoid monotonous groupings, to endeavor everywhere to make use of bright, eye-refreshing contrasts in material, form, color, scale, mood, etc.

Visitors to museums are usually restrained by various notices: "Do not touch," "Do not mount these steps," "No copying or photographing without special permission." We decided to place most of the exhibits, except very rare objects, at the full disposal of the visitor.

We worked upon the premise that children find dynamics pleasant and congenial. We endeavored, therefore, to enliven our exhibitions, and this was expressed not only by placing in the hands of the children mechanical and constructive toys, but, far more important, by encouraging the internal dynamics, the dynamics of the creative process.

In the museums we see the ready product of creation; we do not witness the act of creation itself. The children are most of all interested in the process of creation—how and wherefore a thing is made. And we were enticed by the possibility of showing the children the thrilling dynamics of creation.

Our first exhibition was organized in the Museum of Fine Arts. It was called "For children about animals," and was prepared for the preschool and junior ages.

We chose this particular theme for the following reason: In all branches of art it is easy to find diverse material about animals understandable to children; in other lines we would have had to order things which we could not afford at the time. So we decided to use ready objects, arranging them, however, in a new way.

We succeeded in obtaining from the Moscow sculptors, V. Vatagin and I. Efimov, several splendid works in wood and marble.

In the Museum of Fine Arts they had made for us two or three casts from antique sculptures.

It was not difficult to select a number of toys from wood and clay, not only Russian, but also foreign (German, Japanese, Mexican). To these were added a few things from papier mâché. A happy idea occurred to us to order from Archangel and Tver some wonderful sweetbreads in the images of reindeers, sterlets, etc. From a Moscow bakery we ordered a horse and a swan—the favorite objects of the so-called bakery sculpture. Neither did we omit to include two or three peasant embroideries with the primitive drawings of animals in the childish style of creation. Naturally, we gave attention to winding-up toys, and also to constructive folktoys, like the popular smith and bear or hens pecking seeds.

By way of experiment, a few art students made for us three models: (1) a wolf before a hut in the woods; (2) pelicans catching fish, and (3) a camel caravan in the desert.

The picture book, which plays such an important rôle in the life of a child, was also utilized, chiefly for illustrations. This material, supplemented by a few photographs, showed the relations between man and beast, whether friendly or hostile or serving as a basis of food and material for human consumption. For the special study of child reaction to our impressions, several watercolors and engravings, interesting as to subject or execution, were exhibited.

Altogether there were about one hundred exhibits. Later on we found that even this was too much and that this modest collection could be advantageously reduced by one half. We changed the grouping of the exhibits three times, studying the reactions of the children. When arranging the things we consulted the children, obtaining from them replies like the following: "It must be done so as to be more entertaining. Let this cat stand as though inspecting the exhibition. The little hare should be placed in front, so that

it might be patted. The bird should drink water from a plate."

Thus, the children preferred the functional principle, and this is quite natural, because they seek dramatic interest in everything. Let me remind the reader that I am speaking here about little children.

Of course, we did not blindly follow the children's advice. For instance, the children suggested putting the horses in separate stalls; this we did, but in a manner most adapted to the purposes of our exhibition: we selected toy horses of different types and the children were invited to tell which ones were the best.

In the middle of the room was a big table with the inviting inscription: "Everything here may be handled." And our invitation was not ignored by the young visitors. It was a sight to behold the eagerness with which they crowded around this table, fingering, handling, winding up everything that was possible. Of course, we had to get spare toys to replace broken ones. This indicates that the bulk of the toys consisted of cheap, replaceable articles. We also had a few rare objects that were carefully watched. Here again a tremendous difference was revealed between the approach of the child and that of the adult. Adult visitors are frequently moved by sensational, outstanding appraisals: "See that famous statue!" "See the greatest treasure of the gallery!"

To the children every work of art is anonymous, and it is not at all a bad thing that they are no sophisticated worshippers of big names.

In the exhibition room the sculptor, V. Vatagin, molded animals from clay, doing it in the form of play and amusement. The children frequently dictated to the sculptor what to do, and here they saw how the material submits to the will of the artist. At times the sculptor engaged the children in a contest either with himself or with each other, and this proved to fascinate them most.

Every visitor was permitted to make a toy

for himself from papier mâché, to cut out from paper, to glue and tint an animal mask, or to make a drawing of any entertaining object.

We introduced in the exhibition so-called museum games, having borrowed this method from the practice of children's museums in the United States. For this purpose we had printed on cards a variety of questions of quizzing, evaluatory, or jocular character. The very process of looking for the needed exhibit aroused tremendous interest among the children, making them observant, active, and self-dependent. At times a task was jointly given to several children, and they helped one another or brought out different and contradictory points of view.

The attendance and success of the exhibition surpassed all our expectations despite the lack of advertising and the more than modest premises. It even seemed to us that the children felt more at home here than in the grand museum halls.

The children of our district began to come several times to our exhibition, sometimes every day. Now, children do not come to an exhibition as a matter of courtesy. It was necessary to devise some amusement for these frequent guests, so that they might not hinder but help their comrades. Regretfully, the exhibition did not last long enough for us to go more deeply into this work. Here is a typical case:

A twelve-year-old boy, whom I found out later to be the son of a chauffeur, became interested in a little round revolving table which was not in use.

"What do you like in this table?" I asked him.

"Don't you see, it has a glass lid. Postage stamps could well be laid out under it. I have a collection of stamps, many of them with the images of animals. May I bring them to the exhibition? I also have a lot of other things. I've got eleven ancient arrows, and all different ones."

The sparkling eyes of the youngster betrayed the ardent collector. That very day

his stamps were added to our exhibition. The following morning the boy brought some biscuits with animal designs. I can imagine how the enthusiastic collector had sacrificed a relishing treat in order to enrich our exhibition.

Later on we organized such children into circles of young naturalists, technicians, and philatelists, endeavoring to lead them on from individual to social interests. We kept diaries in which we endeavored to record everything that merited attention. It ought to be said that the method of contrast grouping in itself made it easier for us to observe the reactions of the children of different ages and social and intellectual levels. Thus, preschool children liked most of all the decorative, motley toys, whereas the older children preferred realistic, "truthful" ones.

One little ten-year-old girl was asked which horse was the best.

"I believe," she said, "the little children will like this one best, the toy one. But I like better that other one; it looks more alive."

"Why so?"

"I cannot explain it to you. The little one will be afraid of a live horse: it might kick him. But he won't be afraid of a toy one. He will sit on it and play with it."

There was a different perception of the exhibition as between city and village children. Never shall I forget how in a village whither we carried our exhibition two youngsters inspected a plaster group showing a mare and a colt. Attentively, slightly envious, they eyed the good mare as though at a horse fair.

"A fine horse," said one of them wistfully, adding with a deep sigh: "A good horse!"

Reactions of this kind induced us to elaborate our expository explanations and to add new themes to our exhibition. Our second exhibition was entitled: "How things are moved." Our purpose was to show the children how man utilizes for his comfort the power of wind, water, steam, and electricity. Here we deliberately combined exhibits of technical character (models, diagrams,

schemes) with works of art in order to emphasize the direct connection between art and material culture.

This time, too, we had illusionary models: (1) a submarine and (2) a flight to the moon. These models were put up as illustrating the works of Jules Verne and the latest technical achievements.

Again museum games were applied while the cards were distributed into three sets according to the difficulty of the questions.

There was also a good number of exhibits made by the children themselves, some of which showed high quality. Telegraph and telephone wires were installed through the whole of the exhibition, care of which was taken by the youngsters themselves. To some extent this exhibition reflected already the advance of the reconstructive period of So-

viet economy, but it was not as yet a polytechnical one in the full sense of the term.

The third exhibition was dedicated to the theme: "Teaching in the past and teaching today." The children are connected with the school for a number of years and it exercises a definite influence over them. It is, therefore, important to show to the children what a long and tortuous road was covered by humanity before the modern methods of teaching were worked out. We thought it would be interesting for the children to see how animals bring up their young, how animals are trained. Next, we showed on a limited number of material (three models, book illustrations, engravings, photographs, newspaper clippings) the ancient, the feudal, the prerevolutionary, and the modern school here and in capitalistic countries.

### Our Club Contributed

I am the president of the "Snapshooters." That is the name we have given to our club for it is a camera club and we take snapshots. In our school we have a fine library. There are many books and magazines, but we found there were no magazines about taking pictures. We talked about this in our club meeting. Then our club secretary wrote to a magazine agency, and they sent us sample copies of seven magazines about photography. At one of our club meetings we discussed which one would be the best magazine to have in our library for the

use of our club and other students in the school who are interested in taking pictures. When we finally decided on one, we voted that the club would subscribe to this magazine as a present to our school library. We are glad to have this magazine in our library because it helps to get other people interested in taking pictures and because it is our contribution to the school library and shows that the Snapshooters Club is grateful for the help that we get from the library.



# So You're Going to Have a Library!

*Old Doctor Duff sets down some advice for the expectant principal*

CHILDREN ARE frequently advised that if they are to be assured of the proper start in life they must choose the right parents. A school library might follow the same advice by choosing as its sponsor the right principal. Here and there water rises above its own level; here and there a school has an excellent library and a stupid principal. But the general rule is: Like principal, like library. When the principals everywhere are converted to a full belief in the library as the hub and heart and hearthside of the school, then we shall be able to explore the depths of possibilities which lie beneath our present practices in the school library. I am addressing these paragraphs to principals of junior and senior high-schools, especially to the ones who have no library facilities at all or quite inadequate ones. For the others, what I have to say may fortify them in the faith.

A school library costs money. It costs a lot of money. But when it is properly organized and efficiently administered, it costs less in proportion to the service it gives than any other department of the school. It is cheaper, it stands to reason, to have a central library than many separate classroom libraries—nobody who is informed on the matter would claim otherwise. It is cheap when it is efficient; it is efficient when it functions for every student and every teacher in the school. It is an expensive luxury only when it is "kept"—a pampered mistress for the English department; when it has become the hallowed precinct of some vestal virgin who, because she loves "learning" and hates children, has strategically retreated from the classroom and fortified herself behind the library desk. It is an expensive luxury when it is prostituted to use as a study hall, as it has often been by superin-

tendents who read nothing but the *Rotarian* and deplore frills and fads.

The school library is a laboratory, an office, a study, and a living room. It is naturally difficult to furnish it so that it will serve all these purposes and still retain some unity. The formal characteristics of the office are at odds with the informal ones essential to the living room. What results you are able to get will depend on how much you have to spend for furniture and how much taste you have in selecting it. The firms which specialize in library equipment offer a fairly wide choice of designs and finishes, all made to specifications approved by expert librarians and constructed in such a way that it will outlast the school building. The cost of such equipment varies. There are catalogue prices, of course, and these are usually so high that they throw a board of education into convulsions. But if you buy in a competitive market and secure competitive bids from a number of manufacturers and dealers, you will be surprised to find how little the catalogue prices mean. Be advised in this, however: the purchase of equipment for a library requires consultation with experts. If you depend on inspiration or mother wit, you let yourself in for some serious mistakes.

No matter how we expand the functions of the library, there is still a place for books. The new services the library has added have actually enhanced the importance of books and increased the demand for them. The selection of books is a paramount issue, then, in establishing or in developing your library. The principle to remember here is that book selection is the business of a person who has professional training for the work. And it is the business of a person who is intimately acquainted with the purpose and methods

represented in your school. No ready-made book list will do. No committee of experts four hundred miles away can serve you competently.

What I am saying is this: do not set up a library with books and furniture and other materials selected by the school board and the superintendent and then invite a librarian to come in and make something out of the hodgepodge you have. Instead, get a librarian first. Give her some teaching to do. Let her become acquainted first hand with the program and the people the library is to serve. Then give her free range to design a library to their needs and to order the material to set it up.

This is the ideal way to get started, and it can be used in 5,492 schools where there is no library services at all or in the others where the "library" is only a shelf or two of rag-tag books housed in some dark alcove and opened twice a week by the principal's clerk. Book selection in an up-and-coming library that meets every standard is still a professional matter carried on by the librarian.

One point I have not made clear, however, is of great importance: the librarian, though she exercises the final judgment in the selection of books, will solicit from teachers and from pupils their requests for new books. The science instructor, if he is at all familiar with the literature of his subject, will be able to supply the titles of many books he would like to have for use in his department. The teachers in the general shop will request many books chosen for their value to students in what the industrial-arts people call "related study." When all the requests are in, there may be several times as many as can be supplied. The librarian, then, edits the list, selects items for the next purchase, and engineers this purchase economically.

The school library will provide a large selection of magazines, for these are justified both on the basis of students' present interests and on the basis of their probable reading habits as adults. Magazines are inex-

pensive. They cannot replace books, of course, but the same amount of money spent for subscriptions carefully chosen will benefit during the term a larger number of students than the same amount spent for books. When up-to-dateness, newness, freshness are important, magazines have a distinct advantage over books. The great variety of periodicals available permits a selection which will cover the whole range of student interests and aptitudes. There are girls' magazines. For young scientists we can supply a number of good ones. Adult magazines serve the precocious, and for the not-too-bright who find small joy in reading, there are the picture magazines and rotogravure sections.

The preparation of a subscription list, or the revision each term, ought to be a coöperative job. The teachers and students who use the magazines will nominate their favorites; the librarian will make the final choice. The list must fit the program of the school, of course, but efficiency will demand that the magazines which are available in most homes should be replaced on the subscription list by other worthy but less familiar ones. Magazines published abroad ought to be considered here—there will be objections, of course, from those who object to anything that is not "100 per cent American" but the librarian will make up the list with a less provincial attitude. Juvenile and adult periodicals published abroad will bring into the school some of the good flavor of life outside our own parish. The greater stability of old-world culture is in the best of these magazines. The magazines—those which are not filed intact for reference—will furnish a fine harvest of material for the clipping drawer of the vertical file.

The nature of the services rendered by the library will in every case be directly related to the general methods of instruction employed in the school. It is a peculiar virtue of the library that it may be used to advantage in every type of school, the most formalistic and the most progressive. But,

according to the bias of the writer, the library is usually a liberalizing influence. Indeed, the master librarian—one who sees the trees and the forest—is in a strategic position to improve both teaching and learning throughout the school. In a valid scheme of cost accounting some part of the expense of library service might be charged to the budget for supervision; the librarian is not a supervisor in the traditional sense, of course, but the influence she may exert for the improvement of teaching is at once more subtle and more effective than the do-as-I-say method of many supervisors. Moreover, the librarian meets the teacher as an equal, a fellow, not as one who must one day sit in judgment on all teachers, rating them plus and minus, true and false, on the official rating form.

Your library is to teach *with*, or to teach *through*, or to teach *into* or *from*. But it is never never never something to teach. It is not a subject. It is not a subject department. These distinctions are useful in appraising plans for "library instruction." A great many school libraries, as soon as they have the essential equipment, launch a course in library instruction. It is hard to tell who is to blame for this, the librarians or the teachers, or both. It must be the librarians, for these courses usually represent a kind of miniature course for librarians; that is, the content is derived from the technical information the librarians have. But the principle represented is the old academic one: desirable knowledge (that is, knowledge that the teacher and the librarian think is desirable) is organized and taught to children systematically for their own good. Sometimes the instruction is so thorough that the pupils, when they have completed the course, are convinced that the library is a place to be systematically avoided.

A modicum of group instruction of this kind is probably justified when a class is being introduced to the library for the first time. But it ought to be given informally, not required as something to be passed. Cer-

tainly nobody should be denied the use of any library service because he happens to be one who has failed to learn the parts of a book or the classification numbers or some other information which he is likely to learn when, as, and if it is useful to him in doing the things he wants to do. Library instruction—instruction in the use of the library—is best learned through using the library. Workbooks, courses, contracts, and all the rest of the pedagogical devices of academic teachers are useful only as supplements to purposeful activity. As the Dodo wisely observed when he undertook to instruct Alice and the others in the caucus race, "The best way to explain a thing is to do it." What the student does, in proportion to his interest and satisfaction, is what he learns. A library that offers itself generously for use will seldom need crutches. Beware of Greeks bearing workbooks.

If you have provided all the trappings and all the tools, all the persons and all the purposes, it is your privilege, after things have had time to get under way, to apply some measures to determine what you have for your money. It is difficult, of course, to devise measures that are valid and adequate, but the point is that books and furniture do not make a library. The amount of money spent for equipment and supplies, or the number of square feet of space allowed for the library, or the number of degrees the librarian has got—these are not final indices of the efficiency of your library. Handsome is as handsome does! What does your library do? What does it do for your students and teachers? or more important, what does it do *to* them? What changes does it cause inside of them? How does it modify their picture of earth and their vision of heaven? I have no rating form to offer you by which you may estimate how much life has been brought into the room you provided with lifeless materials, nor how much of the life abundant it gives to those who come to this library. But this you must estimate if you are concerned for the success of your project.

The single characteristic that marks the new library from the traditional one more than any other is the way in which the whole school coöperates with the librarian. It is not the library for the school, but the school for the library. It is a community enterprise, a convincing demonstration for all who participate in sharing alike the collected resources of the whole group. The librarian is supported at every turn by the faculty-student library committee. A library club promotes special projects. The printshop prints bookmarks, forms, bookplates, and posters. Student assistants vie for the privilege of caring for the plants, the fish, and the birds that bring life into the library. Student readers write book reviews (optional, never required) and help in selecting books and magazines. The school paper runs a library page. The shop makes bookends, display cases, and picture frames. The art department contributes posters, maps, charts, wall hangings, and transparencies for the windows. There is no person in the school—principal, janitor, teacher, pupil, nurse—who does not invest something of himself in this coöperative enterprise. The library for all, all for the library!

The school library has been taking on new responsibilities to adapt it to the service of progressive education. When classroom teaching was a routine matter of textbook assignments and recitations, the library was the place where George and Helen went,

infrequently, to "look up something in the encyclopedia." There are still libraries that are no more important than that. But there are others that have so outgrown the old idea of library service that they deserve a new name entirely. They have not only books but magazines, they have not only pictures but objects—starfish, autographs, pottery, ship models, costume figures, tray on tray of bugs and moths, stamps, crystals, shells, fossils, tropical fish, jumping beans—and whatnot. Library is not the word, and museum is not the word, and library-museum is only a little better; but this queer jointed word will have to do until we have a better one. By any name whatever, the new school library-museum is something to give new life to jaded teachers and new hope for education.

The library-museum is the pioneers' domain, a new frontier in educational method. Do not ask me where one may go to see a school where teachers and pupils are adventuring with this innovation. Do not ask me, but tell me. I know a few, but there are many schools where they are enjoying a kind of library service not dreamed of in the philosophy of the conventional teachers and librarians. Find these. Tell me where they are and what they have done, and next term we shall fill a whole issue of *THE CLEARING HOUSE* with descriptions of school libraries transcendent.

### Our Teacher-Poet

Mr. Gerald Raftery, whose poem, *School Library*, appears in this issue, is a teacher in the Grover Cleveland Junior High School, Elizabeth, New Jersey. Mr. Raftery occupied a principal place on the program of the Eleventh Annual Junior High-School Conference at New York University, March 9, when he read selections from his poems. He has contributed to F.P.A.'s "Conning

Tower" and to many nationally popular periodicals. His poems which have been published in previous issues of *THE CLEARING HOUSE* have brought favorable comment from many subscribers. He is an unusual young man—a teacher who sees his pupils with the eyes of a poet. There should be many more like him—may his tribe increase!

J. C. D.

# The Unit Assignment

Francis D. Curtis

EDITOR'S NOTE: Francis D. Curtis is professor of secondary education and of the teaching of science at the University of Michigan. His analysis of the unit assignment should be read along with the article on the Morrison plan, which immediately follows it.

A. D. W.

PART II OF Monograph No. 13 of the National Survey of Secondary Education<sup>1</sup> provides a wealth of interesting and valuable facts concerning "unit plans" in use in 457 selected American schools. There are ten of these "plans characterized by the unit assignment"; namely, "(1) the project method, (2) the problem method, (3) differentiated assignments, (4) long-unit assignments, (5) the contract plan, (6) the laboratory plan, (7) individualized instruction, (8) the Morrison plan or some modification, (9) the Dalton plan or some modification, and (10) the Winnetka technique or some modification." A detailed study of the conclusions reached as a result of a careful and detailed analysis of 213 pertinent articles published between 1916 and 1930, and of the practices in these selected schools, leads the author of the monograph to this summary:<sup>2</sup>

The conclusion is inevitable that, in practice, differentiated assignments, long-unit assignments, individualized instruction, the contract plan, the laboratory plan, the problem method, and the project method are one and the same thing, differing only in name.

Later in the same summary article, the author says:

... detailed comparisons failed to disclose any secondary schools in which the procedures ap-

proximated either the Dalton plan or the Winnetka technique closely enough to justify the use of either term to indicate what the schools were doing. A few schools were found in which the methods, with obvious deviations, were roughly paralleling certain procedures advocated by Morrison. On the whole, however, the practices of all three groups of schools were much alike, all being attempts to develop classroom procedures adapted to the use of some form of unit assignment.

In his conclusion at the end of this summary article, the author says:

So far as the actual practices of secondary schools are concerned, the terms describing the ten plans characterized by the use of the unit assignment are essentially synonymous.

Granted, after a consideration of this convincing evidence, that the terminology used in common practice to designate different types and modifications of unit teaching is meaningless, the fact remains that the use of unit assignments in one form or another, designated by one name or another, has been and is rapidly spreading in our secondary schools. Teaching by the unit plan has enjoyed a remarkable gain in popularity during the past five years, but there is no reason to believe that this popularity as indicated by the spread of the use of unit assignments is necessarily a valid measure of their value. It may be quite as logical to assume that the unit plan rode to popularity on the depression because it made possible a reduction of instructional costs by permitting an enormous increase in class size. While there is no doubt that the use of unit assignments has displaced to a significant extent other means of effecting learning, the legitimate question arises: Are the actual intrinsic values of the use of unit assignments sufficient to justify its supplanting other means of instruction?

There are undoubtedly potential merits of

<sup>1</sup> Roy O. Billett, *Provisions for Individual Differences, Marking, and Promotion*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Roy O. Billett, "Plans Characterized by the Unit Assignment," *The School Review*, November 1932, pp. 653-668.



unit assignments; but there are equally obvious shortcomings of sufficient gravity to justify extreme caution in introducing any form of unit plan for an entire course. Before there can be a justified sanction for supplanting more conventional means of instruction with the use of unit assignments, there must be a careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages inherent and potential in the latter procedure.

Among the prominent advantages of the use of unit assignments advanced in the study already cited and in other authoritative discussions are these:

1. The use of the unit assignment offers an unusually effective means of providing for the individual differences of pupils. The use of "guide sheets" or "assimilation sheets" ensures that each pupil will work individually on tasks which are to a greater or a lesser extent of his own selection; also each pupil may progress at his own rate and in accordance with his own capacities.
2. It places the emphasis upon pupil activity rather than upon the activity of the teacher. This claim would hardly be questioned; yet it is obvious that this advantage is not unique—that it may be achieved through other means of instruction. It is probable, however, that teacher activity is subordinated to pupil activity more frequently and in a greater number of classes when there is a use of unit assignments than when conventional procedures are employed.
3. "Pupils clearly prefer the unit assignment to the traditional classroom work—an important fact if the pupil's emotional set towards his tasks be regarded as significant."<sup>3</sup> This claim is open to question in those courses in which all the work is organized in terms of unit assignments. Eventually in such courses many pupils react against the unit assignments just as they react against any other unvaried procedure.
4. It affords a practical basis for remedial work and is especially well adapted to the

needs of slow pupils. The first part of this claim implies a potential rather than an assured advantage. The basis is present but whether or not it will be utilized depends upon the skill, energy, and ambition of the teacher and upon the size of her teaching load.

5. "It affords interesting challenges to bright pupils."<sup>3</sup> This is an important advantage when one considers the frequently reiterated charge that in the conventional classroom the tasks are set for the abilities of the submediocre group.

6. It is especially well adapted to certain types of material which are difficult to motivate and to carry on to successful "mastery" by other classroom procedures. Such types of material include drill materials of all sorts, especially those of the kinds found in mathematics courses.

7. It ensures, to a greater extent than do other plans of instruction, individual pupil effort and participation in learning activities. At its best and for most of the period for individual work the use of unit assignments may enlist the willing if not the enthusiastic activities of a hundred per cent of the class.

8. The construction of guide sheets provides opportunity for introducing and integrating a wide variety of instructional activities, such as problems, projects, extensive reading, and the like. The successful provision of such opportunity, however, obviously depends upon the skill, adroitness, and inspiration of the constructor of the guide sheets. It is obvious, moreover, that these same instructional activities may be employed with probably equal success in other types of instruction.

Opponents of the use of unit assignments to supplant other techniques of teaching stress these disadvantages:

1. The continued use of any form of unit assignments is likely to degenerate into monotonously presented materials, with the guide sheets consisting of stereotyped tasks all patterned after the same model. Thus it may merit the criticism implied in the edu-

<sup>3</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*

ational aphorism, "There can be no method or technique so poor as even the best one, if it be used constantly and without variation."

2. The use of unit assignments tends to encourage administrators to increase class size to a point where the instructional activities of the classroom teacher become reduced to the vanishing point. The justification of such an increase in pupil-teacher ratio is obviously that it makes possible a substantial reduction in the expense of instruction. But reducing instructional costs by increasing the size of classes cannot be considered as effecting real economies unless the quality of instruction can be improved or at least maintained in larger classes. A number of research investigations of the relative advantages of large and small classes have recently been published, the findings of which are interpreted by the investigators as indicating that at least as good results can be obtained with large classes by the use of unit assignments as with smaller classes in which conventional methods of teaching are employed. These reports have carried great weight, no small part of which may be attributed to the fact that they seem to give sanction and authority to what is needed and desired by all those whose responsibility it is to conduct efficient schools with a minimum expenditure of difficultly secured funds. Moreover, they are the products of the best source of educational guidance we possess; namely, educational research. But while the hope of educational progress in future undoubtedly lies in educational research, we must never lose sight of the fact that educational research is still a crude tool in only its formative stages. None of the claims based upon these studies of small and large classes can withstand competent statistical analysis and criticism of techniques and findings. The findings and conclusions are, of course, interesting and important, and are possibly to some slight extent indicative; but certainly they are in no sense conclusive. These studies of relative

values are confined almost wholly to a consideration of subject-matter learning because thus far we know very little about testing for any other goals of instruction. But in the light of modern opinion the mere learning of subject matter, while essential in every course, is not a major goal of instruction; it is merely a means to more important objectives, such as the functional understanding of principles and the acquiring of ideals, skills, appreciations, and attitudes. If a teacher is really a constructive instructional influence, then it is reasonable to expect him to effect concomitant values which are of paramount importance, even though as yet we are not clever enough to isolate these values, much less to test the extent to which they have been secured. Furthermore, it seems reasonable, though objective evidence may not yet be available to substantiate the supposition, that at least some of these concomitant values which are gained through intimate pupil-teacher relations may be appreciably effected only in small classes.

It is interesting to note in connection with a consideration of class size that contrary to existing practice Morrison advocates a rigorous limitation in class size when his unit plan is used with high-school classes. He says:<sup>4</sup>

In the secondary period . . . the teacher must be able to know the individual at every step. In the science type especially, the exploration requires that the teacher shall be able to form a just impression of the intellectual background of every pupil. In presentation he must be able to sense from the presentation test papers the extent to which every pupil has caught the central thought of the unit. In supervised study, he must be able to come intimately in contact with the methods which each presents. In the written recitation, he must be able to read thoughtfully and critically the papers of perhaps three fourths of the class on every unit, and many of them two or three times . . . Obviously, some teachers can effectively handle a larger number in one course in the science type than is possible in another. In general, we find

<sup>4</sup> Henry C. Morrison, *The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931), pp. 314-315.

empirically that classes up to thirty can be managed without serious difficulty.

3. The percentage of pupils who can individually receive teacher help is smaller with the use of unit assignments than with skillfully conducted socialized procedures. Obviously the teacher cannot diagnose pupil difficulties as quickly from an examination of his written work on the assimilation sheet or guide sheet as from his participation in a variety of developmental techniques. Many retiring pupils who may most seriously need help, but who often do not receive it under the unit plan because they do not seek it, can be reached and helped by being brought into the socialized activities of a developmental period. Also gifted pupils who are capable of profiting most from individual help are probably less likely to receive it under the unit plan than under a socialized developmental plan because they do not demand it and because they are able to do satisfactory work without it.

4. The instruction provided by guide sheets is likely to lack freshness, vitality, and allure because it must be prepared long in advance. Of necessity the assignments and directions are "cold-storage" products. There is no opportunity for the teacher to vary the attack in response to promising leads which develop from day to day.

5. The use of unit assignments is likely to result in the elimination of certain instructional techniques and methods of proved value, which must be discarded because they cannot be carried on easily during the period when the pupils are working with their individual study-guide sheets. Such methods and techniques might include teacher demonstration of experiments in science, reading aloud and discussing selections in social science classes, oral demonstrations of propositions and of problem solutions in geometry and algebra, and the like.

6. The use of unit assignments seems likely to diminish social values and social train-

ing by decreasing, in some cases, almost to the point of elimination the chances for socialized class activities in which *all* the pupils can participate as one group. It may be objected that the "recitation" stage or the "class-discussion period" furnish abundant and varied opportunity for oral participation; and this objection may be valid in those classes in which a considerable portion of the time of the unit is devoted to such socialized activities. But in that large number of schools which the survey indicates as devoting only a relatively short time to such activities the criticism must be deserved, at least to a considerable extent.

7. The use of unit assignments is likely to submerge the teacher under an impossibly heavy burden of reading of guide sheets which the pupils have filled out, and of correcting tests. The result may be the substitution of stereotyped and monotonous task performance for inspired and refreshingly varied teaching. Such a burden of monotonous routine work tends to diminish or to discourage teacher enthusiasm and initiative which may be inspired by and develop out of the progress of socialized activities.

This brief catalogue of arguments for and against the use of unit assignments is sufficient to indicate that there is much to be said on both sides. Moreover, whether the advantages to be derived from unit assignments overbalance the disadvantages, or whether the use of unit assignments offers any advantages impossible of realization through the skillful pursuit of more conventional teaching practices is now and is likely for some time to remain a moot point. But the fact remains that the use of unit assignments has become a widely established practice, and that it is likely to continue its spread to an increasing number of schools. Therefore, unit teaching commands intensive study by educators who must strive to capitalize optimally on its merits and to reduce to the minimum the potential dangers and disadvantages inherent in its use.

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# The "Morrison Plan" in Science

Francis D. Curtis, Martin L. Robertson, Wesley C. Darling, and  
Nina Henry Sherman<sup>1</sup>

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following article is the joint contribution of four persons associated with the University of Michigan High School. It should be read along with the article by Professor Curtis on the unit assignment, which immediately precedes it.*  
A. D. W.

MONOGRAPH No. 13 of the National Survey of Secondary Education states that 737 or "nearly 9 per cent of 8,594 schools, whose replies were tabulated, reported the use of the Morrison plan."<sup>2</sup> The report also states that "in none of the schools studied are all the courses organized on the unit plan, and in the typical school considerably less than half of its offerings is presented by means of the so-called 'Morrison plan.'"<sup>3</sup> It states further that the practices of the respondents using the term "Morrison plan" are "in harmony with the practices advocated by Morrison. However, a wide variability of practice is characteristic of this group of schools in each and every respect."<sup>4</sup> As has been stated in the preceding article there can be little doubt that the number of secondary schools using some modification of the Morrison plan is increasing. Therefore, it is desirable to ascertain practical and practicable ways of using the plan effectively. The remainder of this article will be devoted to a discussion of modifications of the Morrison plan which have been found through classroom trial to be effective.

<sup>1</sup> This presentation summarizes a series of "panel discussions" which occupied an entire year's meetings of the department of science of the University of Michigan High School and which were based upon extensive classroom trial of the Morrison plan. Dr. Robertson is now assistant professor of the teaching of science at the Colorado State Teachers College.

<sup>2</sup> Roy O. Billett. *Provisions for Individual Differences, Marking, and Promotion*. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, Office of Education, 1933, p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 264.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 265.

The first step in the introduction of the Morrison plan consists of dividing into units the material to be covered. Morrison defines a unit as "a comprehensive and significant aspect of the environment, of an organized science, or an art, or of conduct, which being learned results in an adaptation in personality."<sup>5</sup> A unit of the science type is presented to the pupils by means of five steps: exploration, presentation, assimilation, organization, and recitation.

## THE EXPLORATORY PERIOD

According to Morrison the primary purposes of the exploratory step are "economy, the establishment of apperceptive sequence, and orientation."<sup>6</sup> It is intended to provide a means of determining what the pupil already knows so that he may be excused from valueless repetition, and to connect the work of the unit with the previous experiences of the pupil so that there may be a continuity between his past experiences and the experiences which are to follow. "Orientation as used by Morrison refers to the teacher. The teacher needs and should get such direction and orientation from the exploration step as will enable him to know how best to proceed in the next phase of the teaching and learning cycle, the presentation step."<sup>7</sup>

The Survey reveals in actual classroom practice certain deviations from the chief purposes of the exploratory step as stated by Morrison. These, according to the Survey, are "to determine the pupil's preparation for the study of the new unit, to arouse his interest, to locate pupils needing

<sup>5</sup> Henry C. Morrison. *The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931), pp. 24-25.

<sup>6</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

<sup>7</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*, p. 240.



special help, and to introduce the unit to the pupils."<sup>8</sup> The principal methods used in effecting these purposes were found to be oral questioning, class discussion, a written objective pre-test, and a written essay-type pre-test.

It is difficult to understand how any or all these methods could effect a realization of the first and third of these objectives. Of course, one would enthusiastically endorse the statement that "economy of time both for the teacher and the learner is obtained when pupils are not taught over and over again what they already know; if they are not required to go through the motions of acquiring an attitude, concept, or understanding which they have acquired already."<sup>9</sup> But how can one determine what pupils already know or have acquired? In order to locate the pupils who already know enough about the unit that they may be excused from part or all of it, or those who need special help with any part or all of it, it is necessary to have tests which measure with acceptable reliability and validity the desired outcomes of the unit. The art and the science of testing have not as yet been developed to the point which makes this desired outcome possible. Thus far little is known about measuring the attainment of objectives other than a knowledge of subject-matter achievement; tests which measure desired attitudes, skills, appreciations, and the like are still in their rudimentary stages. Furthermore, there is a growing conviction among teachers and educational authorities that a knowledge of subject-matter facts, while essential in the achieving of every other objective of a course, is merely a means to an end, and that it should not be considered, as it is in too large a number of classrooms, an important end in itself. Therefore, it seems absurd to attempt a thorough diagnosis of pupil equipment or pupil needs with such imperfect tests as even the best which we are now able to make.

Moreover, a perfect score on an objective subject-matter test or on an essay test of the conventional type could not logically be accepted as indicating the attainment of the objectives which are of major importance in the study of the unit. The administering of a pre-test for diagnostic purposes, therefore, seems largely a futile practice.

Another consideration lends weight to this indictment of the practice of administering a pre-test for diagnosis. Even if there were available to any teacher any test or battery of tests by which he could determine the pupil's possession of desired outcomes, the effective use of such tests would probably prove impracticable because of the limitations of the teacher's time and energy. The pupils must take their pre-tests during the first period devoted to a new unit. If their present equipment and their further needs are to be diagnosed, their papers must be corrected and individually examined in detail before the work upon the third step, the assimilation, begins. Obviously no brief test will serve. Let us take as an example the case of a teacher who has five or six classes in each of which are enrolled thirty-five pupils (fifty or more pupils per class are not unusual). Let us suppose that only two of these classes were to begin a new unit on the same day. The teacher would be obligated, then, in the two or three days preceding the assimilation work, to correct seventy tests and to make individual diagnoses for all the pupils represented—a difficult if not an impracticable task in view of the fact that this is only a part of the teacher's work. When it is considered that the task just described is probably an easier one than the average teacher employing the Morrison plan would face, the unfeasibility of the program of pre-testing for diagnosis becomes more obvious.

Oral questioning and class discussion could doubtless be made to serve the purposes of arousing interest and of introducing the unit to the pupils. But it is difficult to understand how these procedures could

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.



be made to serve as a diagnosis. Also, there seems to be confusion reflected in some of the replies from the Survey between the functions of the exploratory step and those of the presentation step, since a considerable percentage of teachers assigned the purpose of arousing pupil interest to both these steps.

In the light of these difficulties there seem to be substantial reasons for omitting the exploratory step altogether and for proceeding directly with the presentation step.

#### PRESENTATION

The important purposes of the presentation period as stated in the report of the Survey are "to give the pupils an overview of the entire unit . . . , to arouse their interest . . . ,"<sup>10</sup> and to correct errors in pupils' thinking as discovered by the exploratory step.

Morrison describes the method employed in the presentation step thus: "The teacher approaches the task of imparting in its major essentials in a single period, if possible, the understanding which is the unit. In brief, through direct, convincing oral presentation he teaches the unit itself."<sup>11</sup> Although Morrison warns against lecturing as a method of presentation, nevertheless, according to the Survey, "In the most common procedure used during the presentation period, the teacher tells the unit to the class as a story or sketches the unit in a talk or lecture. . . . After the story, talk or lecture pupils are encouraged to ask questions. Several respondents make it clear that pupils are encouraged to ask questions during the talk as well as after. Class discussion may, but usually does not, follow the presentation."<sup>12</sup>

There are obvious dangers in these procedures advocated by Morrison and described by the respondents to the Survey. First, there is the danger that in "teaching the unit itself" or telling the "unit to the class as a story" the teacher may give a con-

densed summary of the important principles or other desired outcomes. Thus he may kill the interest at the start by answering instead of raising questions. This fault appears in certain unit-plan textbooks in which a summary of the type found in earlier textbooks at the end of a chapter or a unit appears at the beginning as a presentation or preview. It would seem that little pupil learning is possible with such practices because the pupils are told in advance the answers to the problems which later in the assimilation step are presented to them for solution.

A second danger lies in the fact that where the lecture method is used the teacher may not be a skillful lecturer. Even among college and university teachers who are lecturing constantly the skillful lecturer is rare. Secondary-school teachers who lack constant practice in lecturing are likely to be even less skillful. A poorly organized or poorly delivered lecture is likely to result both in loss of interest and in causing confusion in the mind of the pupil with respect to the objectives of the unit.

The authors have found most practical a plan of developing the material of the presentation by preparing in advance a relatively short list of the major problems of which the pupils are expected to learn the answers through a study of the unit. At the beginning of the class period the teacher first makes a few statements intended to arouse curiosity and interest, or he presents slides or a motion picture or displays cuts or posters. The latter method is more popular with the pupils but is not necessarily more successful. One cannot judge the success of the use of motion pictures for motivation purposes solely by the enthusiasm of the class because such enthusiasm may be occasioned by the fact that the pictures furnish effortless entertainment. As soon as the motivating activities have been concluded the teacher states the major problems of the unit or he may through skillful questioning and judicious help lead the class to state them. In

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 252.

<sup>11</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 267, 276.

<sup>12</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*, pp. 252-253.

either case the teacher writes the major problems on the blackboard one by one. After he writes each problem he makes sure of their comprehension by asking the class what questions are suggested to them by the problem. Thus each major problem is broken into smaller problems to which the answers are more easily obtained. The pupils then under the teacher's guidance plan methods of attack—how and where they will obtain the information and gain the experiences needed in solving the various problems. These procedures require careful direction by the teacher, since the questions and the plans proposed must fit the assimilation sheets which have already been prepared.

Morrison advocates the administration of a presentation test not for the purpose of grading the pupils "but solely [for] the purpose of ascertaining whether or not the presentation has registered and with what pupils it has not registered."<sup>13</sup> The Survey states that "a presentation-test paper is required in some schools,"<sup>14</sup> but does not specify the exact nature of this test. The authors have found one serviceable type of presentation test. This consists in giving the pupils an outline composed of brief statements or headings designating the major and the minor problems of the unit outline as already developed in the presentation. If the pupils are able to change these into questions, it may be assumed that they have a good understanding of the problems with which the unit is concerned.

#### THE ASSIMILATION STEP

The purpose of the assimilation step, according to 83 per cent of the respondents of the Survey, is to secure "mastery of the unit by the individual pupil." Others give as the purpose "securing desired adaptations in the pupil as a result of his work with the materials of the unit."<sup>15</sup> The terms "mastery" and "adaptation" are obviously char-

acteristic "Morrisonian" terms, but these are difficult to define in terms of practical school situations and are scarcely measurable with the means of testing thus far evolved. Morrison states as a primary objective of the assimilation period the training of the pupil in the "ability to form independent judgments."<sup>16</sup> The equipment for the assimilation step consists of guide sheets or assimilation sheets which the teacher has prepared some time in advance, an abundance of text and reference materials, laboratory facilities, and the like. Typical materials found on the guide sheets include "references for reading, a list of supplementary projects, directions for study, and an outline of minimal essentials."<sup>17</sup> The materials are organized on two or probably more often on three levels. The first level frequently designated as the C level includes assigned tasks covering the minimal essentials only. All members of the class must "master" these. The next level usually designated as the B level in the three-level organization provides additional problems, projects, readings, and the like from which the pupil may select as he pleases. When a third level is provided for the A pupils, it consists of additional tasks similar to those of the preceding level, but somewhat more difficult; these may be undertaken only after the work of the two preceding levels, those for the C and the B pupils, have been completed to the teacher's satisfaction. Commonly all work beyond the level of minimal essentials is to a certain extent optional with the pupils, though the more capable ones are expected if not required to attack tasks at the higher level or levels. It is obvious, since individual study is the desired method of attack, that the pupil's ability to read with facility and comprehension is fundamentally important to the success of the plan.

Each pupil works at his own speed. According to Morrison the teacher may give oral instruction to a group during the assimilation

<sup>13</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

<sup>14</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>16</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

<sup>17</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

lation period while the rest of the pupils continue their individual work, or the teacher may interrupt study to give instruction to the entire class. According to the Survey "only 7 per cent of the schools report that the pupil is always required to work individually during the assimilation period. . . . That pupils work part of the time individually and part of the time in small groups is a practice much more commonly reported." During the assimilation period much emphasis is placed upon directed study and upon teacher help for individual pupils.

Care must be exercised to avoid several dangers both in preparing the guide sheets and in administering them. First, there is the danger of giving the pupil too much help. It is common practice to furnish exact references for at least the tasks of the lowest level or level of minimal essentials. There is a danger, however, that these references will be so explicit that the pupil gains nothing in ability to search out materials for himself. Second, there is the danger of encouraging superficial work. In those classes in which each level is designated by the letter A, B, or C, to indicate the mark which the pupil may earn by completing the tasks included in that level, there is the danger that the pupils will substitute quantity for quality; that some of the pupils least capable of performing at the A level may be ambitious to attack the problems at this level, and having somehow managed to complete the assigned tasks will expect the promised A even though their work may be below standard in all important respects.

The authors have found it best to prepare the assimilation sheet for two rather than for three levels, the minimal essentials and the additional materials. Every pupil is required to complete to the satisfaction of the teacher all assignments at the lower level. He may then select freely from the additional materials and may study one or a few problems intensively or a considerable number extensively, as he prefers. No mark is assigned for the completion of any particu-

lar task or any number of tasks. Marks are assigned for quality, not quantity, of work. No page references are given as guides to the reading beyond the lower level, and few suggestions even of names of books containing pertinent references are given at the higher level. It has been found most satisfactory to plan the outline for the activities of both levels on the organization of one text and to use all other available texts and materials for supplementation and enrichment. This plan avoids much of the confusion resulting from pupil use of an outline which follows no particular text but which consists of a miscellaneous assortment of references to be selected and read in any order whatever. Since a given topic is discussed at different points in various books, it is inevitable that the pupil following no particular book outline will encounter passages which he cannot clearly understand because he lacks the background supplied in the materials preceding the reference in the text.

Since the unit plan is likely to be employed with very large classes, it is essential that the teacher organize the assimilation materials so that he may guide the pupils effectively and not be submerged in a hopeless welter of paper reading. It is well to prepare for the minimal essentials some short-answer new-type tests which the pupil may answer after but not before he has completed his reading of this material, and which can be readily checked by the teacher in a few moments. The other tasks which the teacher must check in the minimal-essential level should wherever possible be so designed that the teacher can tell at a glance whether the pupil has gained the desired understanding. As the teacher follows the progress of the work he can initial such portions of the papers as he has time in class to examine, thus reducing the amount of subsequent paper reading. He must, however, resist the temptation to devote much time and attention to in-class checking, lest by so doing he neglect individual diagnoses and help, which

are his major responsibilities during the assimilation period.

In practice frequently the teacher remains at his desk and has the pupils who wish help consult him there. There is a danger in this practice that the indifferent and shy pupils who may need help most will not seek it, and that the brighter ones who might be able to profit most from suggestions will not seek it because they are sufficiently successful without it. And though it may be true as is sometimes stated that a relatively small portion of any class *need* teacher help with their assimilation sheets, this statement cannot be accepted as the equivalent of saying that a relatively small portion of any class is able to *profit* from teacher help. Therefore, it is the teacher's function during the assimilation period to go about the class giving help and direction not only to those who demand it or seem to need it, but to all pupils, both dull and bright, in so far as time and facilities permit.

In order that the entire class may begin each unit together it is well to keep the time devoted to the assimilation period constant for all the pupils, though it is obvious that the brighter ones will do several times as much as the duller ones in the same time.

#### THE ORGANIZATION STEP

Morrison states that in the organization step the pupils "gather up the argument of the unit in outline form, with the essential supporting facts . . . the outline is a coherent and logical argument and not merely an exhibit of facts. The outline may take the form of a syllabus with the main headings which carry the argument, the subordinate headings, and the appropriate subheadings; or it may be an outline in the systematic form of brief topic sentences. In either case, the class must be taught to make the outline, especially in a school in which such teaching is new."<sup>18</sup>

According to the Survey "in more than half the schools, if the unit is a true problem,

the pupil (1) forms a hypothesis for its solution, (2) indicates the data which he has collected, (3) shows how the data support the hypothesis, and (4) draws conclusions."<sup>19</sup>

The authors have found that immature pupils and those of sub-average ability are seldom able even with considerable training to prepare a satisfactory brief of a unit. Even the brightest, if unguided, will often write only a few disconnected statements or will omit major points of prime importance. With the less capable, therefore, and with the brighter ones who have not yet been sufficiently trained to make a good brief, a plan which gives excellent results consists in giving the pupils a mimeographed skeleton outline to guide their efforts at preparing an organization. This outline contains in logical order the major problems of the unit—those which have been developed with the pupils in the presentation step—supplemented by the addition of principles, major generalizations, and attitudes which the unit is intended to teach. The pupil is required to write under each problem, principle, or attitude statements of facts learned from his study of the unit which seem to him to contribute to the solution of the problem, to support the principle, or to establish the attitude. The pupil is expected to do this without reference to his textbook, the guide sheet, or other materials. While the class is at work on this organization outline the teacher passes among the pupils, suggesting materials for additional study of unmastered parts and in other ways helps the pupils individually to clarify their thinking. The teacher with large classes should expect to do much of the work of examining these organization sheets while the class is working on them.

#### THE RECITATION STEP

According to Morrison the recitation "is to all intents and purposes the reverse of presentation." In the recitation, "pupils who

<sup>18</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

<sup>19</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*, p. 256.



have mastered the unit present it, the class and teacher sitting as an audience."<sup>20</sup> According to the Survey, "83 per cent of the schools report the chief purposes of the recitation period to be to test 'the pupil's ability to present previously collected and organized facts and principles in such a way as to rouse a desirable emotional attitude in his audience or to convince its intelligence of the soundness of a position taken!'"<sup>21</sup> The methods used include these: "pupils give floor talks on some topic or phase of the unit; pupils give written reports on some topic or phase of the unit; oral reports are given on supplementary topics; general discussions are held on particularly good floor talks; written reports are given on supplementary topics; debates are sometimes held."<sup>21</sup>

It would seem that all of these procedures together suggest serious inadequacies of one sort or another. If the principal purpose of the recitation step is to furnish the pupil practice in presenting his organized ideas before an audience, then it is obvious that in a large class of forty or more only a small percentage of these pupils can have the opportunity to receive this training at the end of any one unit. Those pupils who most need this training or who could profit most from it may not be among the favored few selected to give the lectures or the reports. Also, these floor talks are often observed to serve the purpose of allowing the bright to harangue the dull, or, worse still, of giving a few willing pupils the chance to "show off" and to try to impress the rest. Often in this latter case, the pupil who is lecturing makes no sincere attempt to present his material clearly, but instead uses words and expressions which he thinks may prove unfamiliar and hence impressive to his pupil audience. Even in those recitation periods in which the floor talks are followed by a class discussion with questions the discussion

is likely to be more or less concentrated in a few individuals; for there are always in every class timid and indifferent pupils who prefer to sit back and to take no active part in the discussions.

If the principal purpose of the recitation step is to ensure that incorrect, hazy, or incomplete understanding of the problems of the unit be made correct, clear, and complete, then there seems little likelihood of achieving this purpose when the pupils are allowed to conduct the discussions or when the activities are restricted to reports on only a few topics, even when these are followed by a discussion.

The authors have had best success with the recitation step when they have conducted the class period as a socialized recitation. The teacher takes care to cover all the essential points with a variety of questions directed at as many members of the class as possible. He reteaches by supplementary explanations portions which he finds the class has not clearly understood. In short he conducts an oral review of the entire unit, using every device at his disposal to ascertain the extent to which the pupils have gained a clear understanding of the important outcomes of the unit, to supplement inadequate understanding, and to supply needed information wherever his questioning discovers that it is lacking.

#### TESTING FOR MASTERY

According to Morrison, the "mastery" test should follow the assimilation period. But the Survey shows that, "The mastery test follows the recitation period in 61 per cent of these schools, the assimilation period in 20 per cent, and the organization period in 19 per cent."<sup>22</sup> "Practically all schools report that mastery tests are generally mimeographed and objective. However, about a third of the schools sometimes use both oral and subjective or essay tests."<sup>22</sup>

Morrison defines mastery thus, "When a

<sup>20</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

<sup>21</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-267.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258.



student has fully acquired a piece of learning he has mastered it. Half-learning, or learning rather well, or being on the way to learning are none of them mastery. Mastery implies completeness; the thing is done; the student has arrived, as far as that particular learning is concerned."<sup>23</sup> The Survey states, however, that the various marking systems in practice "suggest a compromise with Professor Morrison's idea that each unit should be mastered by each pupil."<sup>24</sup>

The chief difficulty in the way of putting into practice the Morrison idea of mastery is that the interpretation of the term, despite Morrison's careful definition, is more or less nebulous, or that in actual classroom situations mastery, as Morrison defines it, proves impracticable of achievement. Moreover, as has been previously stated we have not as yet progressed far enough in the art and the science of testing to measure adequately much more than factual information. A satisfactory determination of mastery is, therefore, at present impossible. To be sure, a majority of the teachers in the schools represented in the Survey believed that they gave tests which measured skills, adaptations, attitudes, and habits; yet the Survey states, "The evidence submitted in the form of printed or typed tests suggests that no adequate measurement of attitudes, habits, or adaptations is going on unless it be by

means of a type of testing which is based upon subjective judgments, or on what Morrison calls 'rapport' testing."<sup>25</sup>

The authors have found most effective a unit test composed of some items which measure factual information and of a larger number which test the ability to reason from facts. These are supplemented by items to test scientific attitudes and understanding of scientific method and of principles.<sup>26</sup> With large classes the essay type is largely impracticable because of the enormous amount of reading of test papers entailed; also such tests are subject to other disadvantages, as subjectiveness, lack of comprehensiveness, and the like. With the short-answer tests the pupils exchange papers and each checks the incorrect answer on the other's paper while the questions are discussed one by one. The papers are subsequently returned to their owners, who examine their errors and ask such further questions as they wish. This practice has the double advantage of being in harmony with the findings of extensive research regarding the most effective method of correcting short-answer examination-test items<sup>27</sup> and of affording the advantage of a final review before the close of the unit.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258; Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

<sup>24</sup> Francis D. Curtis and Nina Henry Sherman, tests to accompany *Biology for Today* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1934), pp. 23-28.

<sup>27</sup> F. D. Curtis and Wesley C. Darling. "Teaching Values of Common Practices in Correcting Examination Papers—A Second Study," *School Review*, September 1932, pp. 515-525.

<sup>23</sup> Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>24</sup> Billett, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

# The Basic Course at Eagle Rock High School

A. C. Hentschke

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author of this description of a concrete example of revolutionary synthesis is director of the basic course in the Eagle Rock High School of Los Angeles, California. He recommends that the article by Miss Babson, in this issue of THE CLEARING HOUSE, be read before his own.*

A. D. W.

THE BASIC COURSE at Eagle Rock High School has as its function the drawing together into one unified course of all the elements in the student's school experience which can be considered distinctly social in character. Its academic materials are those earlier described as social studies, broadened and enriched to include English language skills and such literature as interprets and reflects man's developing adjustment to his world. Related materials in music and art with their attendant inspiration are an integral part of the course. Other departments contribute in a variety of ways. All activities which used to be concentrated in the home-room are now combined in the basic-course period, including a carefully developed citizenship unit which ensures the presence of this emphasis in every student's weekly experience.

## SUBJECT MATTER AND PRACTICES

There has been general dissatisfaction with the results of both history and English teaching. Too often English teachers failed to make literature interesting and recognizably valuable in the life of the pupils. History was dry and factual, devoid of the vitalizing elements which a more dramatic and realistic approach makes possible. Both departments required exercises in expression—essays and oral reports—but the English overstressed correctness in form and the history paid

very little attention to anything but accuracy of content. So they tended to defeat one another's purposes. We believe that the new basic-course approach will increasingly tend to eliminate these evils and at the same time reduce the overlapping of effort.

Furthermore, we believe that every student should have the opportunity to master certain skills and techniques over and above those included in the traditional courses in English expression; that it is more important for him to know how to find data that will help him to solve the problems he is interested in than to build up a fund of factual information relating to history. Therefore, we emphasize training in research skills—the use of library resources, the techniques of outlining, note taking, bibliography building, and such—and the problem approach is used generally.

We believe that it is of even greater importance for the student to begin to understand the changing and challenging conditions of the world today; so we take the stress away from chronology in handling historical material and students learn about the past as a means of grappling more effectively with the problems of the present. Thus the study of current affairs is no longer a loose adjunct but has become instead a motivating part of the student's experience.

In the light of the above explanation of our attitudes towards subject matter, it will be easy for the reader to see that the textbook in the basic course attains a new status. Teachers are no longer "textbook slaves" with prescribed "ground to cover." The text is merely another source of student reference, another aid in solving problems.

The standardized test is another device with an altered status. It is valuable in diagnosis, but cannot be used to test teaching results; teachers are free to develop their own work and to devise their own tests. A persistent testing schedule is encouraged, however, with frequent short-answer checks and essay tests to assure understanding and to encourage thinking. The effect of the standardized test has been to regiment the teaching of history and English and to create in the mind of the student the impression that the purpose of his study is to pass tests. The new method should help to relieve strain for both teachers and students and to assure the stressing of more sincere values in both teaching and learning. We are working on a revision of our marking system which should further reduce the emphasis on false goals in our social education.

#### MECHANICAL SET-UP

The basic-course classes are in session two hours a day or ten hours a week in every grade from the seventh through the eleventh. Each is under the direction of one teacher. The exceptions are four double-sized classes taught by two teachers working together. There is no division of time for history and English. The aim is to erase from the minds of both teachers and children the idea that any division of subject matter could exist. It has been thought wise, however, to constitute one teacher the director of English skills for the school. She helps to organize the various divisions of the course to ensure against neglect of the teaching of language skills and is available for conference and assistance.

At the beginning of the term the music and art departments are given outlines of the work planned for each grade division, and in conference with the basic-course teacher a schedule is drawn up providing for dates or blocks of time when appropriate materials and creative activities enter the course under the direction of these departments. Other departments make their con-

tributions by special arrangement between teachers: for example, a French teacher visits a basic-course class to coach its students in pronunciation of proper names from *A Tale of Two Cities* or *Les Misérables*; or a woodshop teacher directs some of his own students in presenting charts, pictures, and explanation of English and French period furniture.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS OF METHODS

The following is an account of how the problem approach was used in conjunction with the study of current affairs:

Two days were spent by the B-11 class in American life and institutions in reading from definite references on the problems of the farmer, today and yesterday. In general the subject matter included early American agriculture, rural living conditions, the farmer's present plight, attempts at farm relief by organizations of farmers and by the Government, the need for future planning. At the same time novels and short stories bearing on farm life were being read, among them *A Lantern in Her Hand*, by Bess Streeter Aldrich, *The Farm*, by Louis Bromfield, *As the Earth Turns*, by Gladys Hasty Carroll, *My Antonia*, by Willa Cather, *Barren Ground*, by Ellen Glasgow.

The need of special investigation of certain topics resulted in students' selecting problems for further investigation. This work was carried on largely in the library. Some of the topics chosen were: Secretary Wallace's background and a study of his *America Must Choose*, grange movements, political parties formed by farmers, farm machinery and its development, farmers' coöperative societies, rural indebtedness in California.

About the fourth day the class began to discuss the background for the general topic. When any member could throw additional light on the phase of the topic under discussion, whether because he had prepared a report on it or because he had read about it independently, he volunteered then and there instead of waiting to give his information at a special time. Literary materials used as interpretation of the problem included Carl Sandburg's poems: *The Farmer*, *The Homesteader*, *The Prairie*; excerpts from *A Son of the Middle Border*, by Hamlin Garland; and some of the *Letters of a Colonial Farmer*, by Hector St. John Crèvecoeur.

Growing out of the study of the farm was a special Thanksgiving program initiated and produced by the students with the coöperation of the basic-course teachers and the teacher of music. A

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summarization of the unit with conclusions culminated the work.

The second illustration is a section of the work outline for the A-11 course in American life and institutions as it was pursued during the first five weeks of the fall semester this year. The outline shows the transition from the B-11 semester's work which had included a study of slavery and the Civil War. It illustrates how the rich and varied materials of the course combine to strengthen one another. It is a teacher's outline and does not show the study plans from which the students worked.

The following activities not indicated in the work outline herewith submitted are regular parts of each week's schedule: (1) discussion of current news; (2) class business (student organizations); (3) usage drills; (4) problems to develop mastery of the effective sentence.

*First week:* Test on summer's current affairs followed by thorough discussion; review of Puritan influence and eighteenth-century political thought; careful study of the rhetorical effectiveness and philosophical implications of the "self-evident truths" passage from the Declaration of Independence; essay with the following points suggested for discussion:

What did the authors mean by "all men are created equal"? To what extent can we accept this principle today? Do we find the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness "unalienable" in America's present social set-up? To what extent do we still believe in the right of the people to "alter or abolish" a government destructive of these rights?

*Second week:* Standardized usage test—diagnostic; research from study outline to review the Jacksonian frontier—developing the concept of American individualism and introducing Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman.

*Third week:* First part of *Self Reliance*; selections from *Walden*. Where I lived and what I lived for: discussion of memorable passages, vocabulary work, paraphrase and interpretation, reading of critical estimates; introduction of the personality of Walt Whitman.

*Fourth week:* Poems of Whitman, selected to illustrate the spirit of American individualism and Whitman's presaging of the more social emphasis in modern life; check test on the labor situation in the textile industry; research from study outline on the aftermath of the Civil War in the South.

*Fifth week:* Continuation of study of reconstruction period with illustrative materials: story and verse; the new South including the modern Negro; discussion; music hour under direction of music department on Negro music—spirituals and real jazz.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY READING

During the past several years there has been constant pressure to reduce the amount of student homework. In compliance with this demand the basic-course work has been arranged to provide for a minimum of student work outside the classroom. This has created the necessity of having certain portions of the two-hour period given over to workshop activities. We prefer the term "workshop" to "study period" for obvious reasons. To carry out this part of our method, it has been necessary to provide materials other than those available in the library. In most classes texts are not issued to individual students, teachers preferring to use classroom sets. In addition to the textbooks, each teacher is building up in her room a library of periodical material, reference books, fiction, and other literary materials that may be studied in class or checked out to students for short periods of time. Materials upon which to base discussion of current affairs are being made increasingly available. Magazine material is abundant in the library, and both magazines and newspapers are supplied generously by individual teachers and students.

The use of the school library occurs under a somewhat more effective plan than ever before. During the noon period and after school students have access to the library freely and without supervision. During class periods, however, the use of the library is confined to classes and groups that go there to work on definite problems, usually according to a schedule devised by the librarian in conference with teachers at the beginning of each semester. The typical senior-high-school group spends one hour in the library each week. Junior-high classes spend one hour every two weeks in such directed work.

In addition to this scheduled activity, smaller groups or committees are free to take their problems to the library when it seems desirable.

#### CITIZENSHIP

The teaching of citizenship in the high school has to a great extent been left to faith and the hope that teachers would as a matter of course seize every opportunity that developed in the classroom to teach character. As a result only here and there a teacher of outstanding vision and strength of character has made a pronounced success in this field; and the great majority of students have received only a hit-or-miss experience in character training. We believe that the teaching of good social attitudes should not be left to chance; therefore we have created a definite place for citizenship instruction in the basic course. In handling the discussion of current problems, the emphasis is always placed upon concepts of fairness and honor in civic, social, and business relationships. In attempting to develop familiarity with the local newspapers, editorial policies and biases are frankly recognized and students are taught to read in the light of such recognition. Another means of achieving the definite grappling with problems of character and citizenship is the lesson plan prepared by the director of the basic course and given to all basic-course teachers a week in advance of the time appointed for the discussion. Subjects such as "sportsmanship," "stealing," and "protection of property" have been used in the current semester. The plan submitted is accepted by the teacher as merely suggestive, and her own ingenuity may take any liberties with the text which may promise to make her work with the subject more effective. Preferably she finds a situation that naturally calls forth the discussion. All basic-course classes attack the problem during the same week, and teachers in other departments, being familiar with the plan also, lend their coöperation. The results of this intelligent direction have been almost

immediately observable in student attitudes. For example, the very urgent and difficult problem of stealing involved clarifying the idea of social responsibility, the distinction between "informing" and "tattling." Part of the lesson plan designed to stimulate the discussion follows:

Every school is confronted with the problem of protecting the property of students, of teachers, and of the public. The school faces also the need of protecting its own reputation and the reputations of honorable students against false accusations. Upon whom does the responsibility lie to bring about the greatest degree of protection? What can students do to help the situation? We know that there are many who are not habitually inclined to steal, but who cannot resist the temptation to pick up things of value if they are left lying about unprotected. What can we do to protect these unfortunate individuals against their own weakness?

Then there is the more serious problem of dealing with those few boys and girls who come to be classed as habitual thieves. In such cases the guilty ones must be discovered and guided. There is practically no opportunity for teachers to detect such malefactors. Information must come from students.

What is the interest of the administration and faculty in receiving information about students suspected of stealing? First it is important to prevent a repetition of the wrong and thus to protect property. But far more important is the opportunity to save a boy or girl from drifting into a life of crime. When we shield such petty thieves, we are keeping the way open for them to become established in criminal habits and pursuits.

What about keeping articles that we find, without making an effort to find their owners? May this not be considered a form of stealing?

How are the reputations of honest students endangered when reports go out that there is stealing in the school?

#### SCHOOL AND CLASS AFFAIRS

The basic-course class is made the center of school activities. All bulletins from the administration and from the student-body office are presented by especially delegated students as part of their classwork. This exercise in social responsibility rarely takes more than fifteen minutes a week, and the increased effectiveness of bulletins when handled in this way convinces us that the



time is well spent. Tickets for athletic contests and other activities are handled by a class treasurer; the school paper and the annual are sold and distributed through the basic-course organization. Students learn to recognize that these are their projects, to be supported by them as such—even as weightier community projects will be supported in the future. Class social affairs are arranged and managed; Community Chest and other social-welfare movements operate through the basic course.

The above account of the work of the basic course at Eagle Rock High School is merely a statement of the conditions under which we are operating, of the goals we hope to attain, and of some of the devices which may help in their attainment. The most we can say at present is that practically all of the teachers engaged in this division of our work are enthusiastic about the new possibilities of achievement which it offers and are optimistic about the ultimate success of our undertaking.

# The New Program at Eagle Rock High School, Los Angeles

Helen Babson

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The author of the article which follows is principal of the Eagle Rock High School in Los Angeles, California. She outlines the principles upon which a new curriculum is being based in connection with the experimental program of the Progressive Education Association.* A. D. W.

EAGLE ROCK, though politically a part of the City of Los Angeles and enjoying the advantage of a metropolitan activity, is socially somewhat of a unit, retaining a self-consciousness from the comparatively recent days when it was a separate town and conducted its own affairs. The population is homogenous and, for the most part, permanent. Within its area is every school facility from kindergarten to college. From its beginning, therefore, eight years ago, the school has had the advantage of this educational continuity and a definite share in the social and cultural expression of a closely united community.

The faculty of sixty-nine, including a non-teaching staff of five, principal, boys' and girls' vice principals, registrar and counselor, and a student body numbering sixteen hundred are organized into two distinct groups, a senior and a junior high, with quite different programs and housed in separate buildings. Operating thus under a plan which tends to remove the objectionable social features of a six-year unit while it retains the longer age span desirable in directing child growth, with a sense of understanding and sympathy in the community and the constructive help and encouragement of the Division of Instruction and Curriculum of the Los Angeles City schools, the faculty have been able to proceed under very favorable conditions. The basis for the school practice lies in the belief that educa-

tion should concern itself with such processes and experiences as may achieve for all those involved, pupil and teacher alike, both the desire and the capacity for abundant living, today and tomorrow, in the present and in the future. To that end, several years have been given to reconstructing the school's curriculum, to eliminating everything that seemed to make no contribution to the child's adjustment to life, and strengthening and vitalizing all procedure that appeared to tend to his better social development; combining and relating both facts and their interpretation wherever such arrangement seemed to serve their purpose; setting up lines of communication between all phases of school life that there might always be an awareness of the unified objective; in a word, endeavoring in every way to formulate a curriculum that should center in the child and his experience. As a result of these years of thinking and working together, the following conclusions are taken as the basis for the school program.

Education is one continuous process and all its factors should be related in the child's consciousness. Its test should be its effectiveness in aiding him to discover and direct himself, to find his place in the social structure, and to make his contribution to the general good. In this process there are (1) four phases of instruction that should be considered, not as separate departments but as interdependent components whose purpose is the relation they bear to the goal of living; and (2) four types of emphasis which should cut across all group activity, emphasis whose significance arises from the organization of the world in which the child lives.

1. The assumption concerning the four phases of instruction are as follows:

a) There are certain fundamental skills and knowledges which every person should possess. These may vary in volume and intensity as the child's capacity will vary, but their application should always be in actual child understanding and participation.

b) Physical well-being is essential to every good life and, therefore, the child should have definite training in both the purpose and practice of health.

c) Since every person finds deep satisfaction in the use of the "gift that is in him," there should be provision, first, for helping the child discover his own major interest and capacity, and, second, for providing him the opportunity to develop it.

d) Life is abundant only as it touches a variety of different activities and interests, of minor importance possibly to the major sphere of capacity but desirable in rounding out the child's personality. None of these should be considered "extracurricular" but all should be an integral part of his education and there should be a full, broad, varied scope for his personal choice.

On these four assumptions, the schedule of the school is set up as follows:

1. Fundamental skills and knowledges

The basic course of the curriculum is one in which the objective is social understanding. Into it are gathered every source of material and type of activity that may help the child through interpretation, participation, and judgment to understand the world of which he is increasingly a part. Music, art, and literature, as vital to this understanding, are parts of the course. In the seventh and eighth grades, the class interest centers in the development of America, "the American epic," and the chief emphasis, as seems best for the grade capacity, is in the geographic and narrative elements. In the ninth and tenth years, the class undertakes a study of world cultures, endeavoring to discover the contributions of the ages, races, and nations to the present state. The eleventh year con-

sists of investigation of American institutions and customs and in the twelfth year a variety of single hour courses, all social in significance, grow directly out of the interests developed in the previous semesters. With the exception of the twelfth year, these are two hours in length.

Out of this basic course grows the motivation for the development of various skills and capacity. Some, such as English both written and oral, are integral parts of the course. Others more specialized, such as science, mathematics, industrial arts, and so forth, reach from this class into other periods of the child's day.

From the seventh through the tenth year a nonspecialized course in science, with the objective of acquainting the child with the physical world, occupies from two to three hours a week. In addition to its relation to the basic course, correlation is made with other courses, wherever such seems natural. In addition, other periods of science, e.g., biology, chemistry, and physics, are offered as part of the scientific major or, in somewhat simplified form, as units under general interests.

For two years, the seventh and eighth, courses are required in the technique of simple mathematics. For the present, these are scheduled one period a day, but it is expected to lessen this amount of time for children who do not need it. As with the science, additional courses—algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and so forth—are offered as part of the major interest or general-interest schedule.

2. Physical well-being

One hour a day for the entire six years is given to the consideration of health. Here a very definite effort is made to depart from the more formal type of physical education and to introduce a varied program around the general objective.

3. Major interests

During the seventh and B-8 semesters opportunity is given the child in every way to discover the type of work best suited to his

individual interest and aptitude. The basic-course instructor, as will be explained later, has for one of his chief concerns helping the child to decide where his natural choice should be. During the A-8 semester for one hour a day the child has opportunity to try his hand and his head in very simple, very elementary exploratory courses dealing with the various major interests—business, art, music, mechanical arts, science, and so forth. As a result of this experience tentative division is made in the ninth grade into the following major-interest groups. (The letters are used merely as a means of distinguishing the divisions for routine purposes.)

- U Groups Students whose major interests are fairly well defined along academic lines, subdivided into scientific and literary majors
- N Groups Students whose major interests are along nonacademic lines and subdivided into music, art, industrial and mechanical arts, domestic arts, business
- G Groups Students who have developed no specific major interest and for whom somewhat general programs seem advisable

During the ninth and tenth years these groups are scheduled together for the main periods of the day, and during the eleventh and twelfth years two hours a day are spent in somewhat specialized study of the chosen interest and its related subjects.

#### 4. General interests

From two to five periods a week during the entire six years, the child is given his choice of general-interest subjects. In the lower grades, especially in the seventh and eighth, part of this time may be spent in a carry-over from a project or activity of the basic course, the completion of work for which the two-hour period seemed insufficient. When the child is weak in some technique or skill, he is required to spend some of his time in "workshop" where teachers are ready to help him make up his deficiency. For the most part, however, this is a period of absolutely free choice and the school en-

deavors to make the offerings as varied as possible, introducing from time to time new courses which have educational value whenever faculty leadership and student desire dictate.

The unification of the student's entire program, as has been stated, lies in the basic course of social understanding. From the seventh through the tenth grade, therefore, the instructor who stays with his group during each two-year cycle of this four-year period becomes in a very personal way the adviser for the individual children in his class. To him come all records, all information, all recommendations, and his contacts with the parents as well as with all the child's school relationships are frequent. Regularly he meets other instructors of the grade so that the continuity of the child's experience may be clear in the consciousness of all his teachers as together they plan the general trend of units of work and the material necessary for their accomplishment. It is this basic-class instructor, who, under the direction of the school counselor, aids the child in deciding his interests, major and general. Through him because of his knowledge and understanding adjustments in the child's program are achieved. In the final analysis, this instructor combines in this capacity the homeroom and guidance functions.

In the two later years, the eleventh and twelfth, the major-interest instructors consult with the basic-course instructor on these matters.

To be effective, such a curriculum requires careful organization of faculty effort and understanding. A member of the group relieved from some classroom obligation for this responsibility, and known as the director of the basic course, heads faculty-committee activity. To each of the three so-called class-cycle groups, seventh-eighth, ninth-tenth, eleventh-twelfth, is assigned a chairman; the basic-course instructors are, in turn, chairman of grade committees composed of all teachers in each grade. Regular

meetings according to a fixed schedule arranged at the beginning of the semester made possible the unification of the plan, and careful but very simple reports in the form of class procedure agreed upon are put on file in the principal's office after each committee meeting.

*Four Types of Emphasis.* The four types of emphasis which should cut across class activity are based on the fact that the child will make his contribution in four life groups: the home, the occupational, the leisure time, and the community or state. There should be, therefore, definite and careful planning to direct all phases of his school experience that he may realize and be ready for his place as a member of a family, as a worker, as a master of his own free time, and, in both the ethical and the political sense, as a citizen.

Four faculty committees, representing a cross section of subject interest, direct the emphasis of the class units into the four life-group channels. The function of these four committees is chiefly advisory and consists of suggestions, with occasional lesson plans, for the grade committees. The citizenship committee, for example, prepares and distributes in all the basic courses regular bulletins dealing with such subjects as

stealing, sportsmanship, student government, and student regulations, etc., which are used as part of the class-instruction period. Under the leisure-time committee a unit correlating all the A-9 groups eventuated in a demonstration at junior-high graduation.

On the other hand, the activities of these committees frequently turn their emphasis towards more direct channels. The vocational committee after ascertaining the vocations in which the young people were interested conducted a vocational day when members of the chosen professions brought student groups first-hand information. The home-membership committee, besides forming many direct contacts with parents, working directly through the parent-teacher association, has organized a class in home relations drawing on fifteen members of the faculty for class instruction scheduled as a general-interest elective in the twelfth grade. A unit consisting of informal discussion of the use of leisure time—concerts, movies, radio programs, art exhibits, etc.—and purposing to define standards of appreciation is given to all tenth-grade students by the leisure-time coördinator.

The chart appearing below illustrates the program by periods and grades.

While it is plain that in a school with an

Grades	I & II	III	IV	V	VI
B7, A7, B8	American epic	Exploratory shop and home economics, 2 days Science, 3 days	Physical well-being	Mathematics	General interest
A8	American epic	Exploratory major	Physical well-being	Mathematics	General interest, 3 days Science, 2 days
B9, A9 B10, A10	World culture	Choice of two mathematics, art, languages, commercial subjects, industrial arts, home economics	Physical well-being	Physical well-being	General interest 2 days Science, 3 days
B11, A11	American life and institutions	Major interest and related subjects	Physical well-being	Physical well-being	General interest
B12, A12	Basic course	Elective major interest and related subjects	Physical well-being	Physical well-being	General interest



enrollment of sixteen hundred there must be some system of bell schedule and student programming, every effort is made to prevent such a system from limiting the child's freedom. It is possible at any time to make constructive adjustment of his day or course, and the faculty, especially the basic-course instructors, are ever alert to discover the need for such adjustment.

Under this curriculum, the formal class procedure of study and recitation is obviously inadequate. It seems best, however, not to attempt at present to analyze or define a new teaching technique but to wait until longer experience points the way for ideal teacher-student relation.

It is also obvious that the usual procedure concerning marks and reports falls short.

The school has attempted, during the past year, to take cognizance of such attitudes as courtesy, coöperation, industry, and so forth, and at present a committee is working on suggestions for the coming semester.

In conclusion it should be stated that the school does not consider that it has made more than a beginning in its effort to afford the child better educational advantages. Of one thing only is it sure, that a system which has for its objective the child and his abundant living must never consider any phase of its administration as final, but that the curriculum, like the life it aims to develop, must be ever an organic thing, constantly changing and adjusting as wider vision is given those whose privilege it is to spend themselves in the cause of education.

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# Comments on Some Recent Mathematics Textbooks

J. Andrew Drushel

THE OPINIONS expressed on this page are the result of the writer's reaction to his study of the following books in connection with his teaching of special methods courses in mathematics in 1933-1934 in the School of Education of New York University.

I. *Geometry Professionalized for Teachers*, by Halbut C. Christofferson. Oxford, Ohio: Published by author. 1933, 203 pages, \$1.50 net to teachers.

A well-written, impartial review of this book by David Eugene Smith appears in the October 1934 issue of *The Mathematics Teacher*.

II. *Unit Mastery Mathematics*, by John C. Stone, Clifford N. Mills, and Virgil S. Mallory. Chicago: Benjamin H. Sanborn and Company, 1934. Book One, v+314 pages; Book Two, v+432 pages; Book Three, v+469 pages.

An attractive, well-built series of junior-high mathematics texts in which "unit mastery" means chapter mastery. The units are chapter titles.

III. *The New Day Junior Mathematics*, by Fletcher Durell, J. A. Foberg, Ralph S. Newcomb, and Vevia Blair. New York: Charles E. Merrill Company. Book One, xii+338 pages, 1932; Book Two, xii+338 pages, 1932; Book Three, xii+430 pages, 1933.

Book Three is a superior text for those ninth-grade children who can be taught to think in algebraic terms. For such children mathematics as here presented will be interesting, understandable, pleasurable, and highly valuable.

IV. *Ninth Yearbook of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*, by Herbert Russell Hamley. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 1934, 215 pages, \$1.75.

This is a scholarly presentation of the function concept in secondary mathematics which should be read by teachers, authors, and publishers of high-school mathematics texts. Administrators and cur-

riculum makers in secondary education can find much stimulating matter in this book.

V. *The New Applied Mathematics*, by Sidney J. Lasley and Myrtle Mudd. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1934, 450 pages, \$1.60.

A fine collection of instructional material for those ninth-grade pupils who should not study algebra.

VI. *Solid Geometry*, by Frank M. Morgan and W. E. Breckenridge. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1934, vii+722 pages, \$1.24.

A well-written text characterized by short topics in organization, by clear-cut figures, by numerous tests of the true-false and completion types, and by an abundance of numerical problems.

VII. *Humanized Geometry—An Introduction to Thinking*, by J. Herbert Blackhurst. Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa: Published by the author, 1934, 206 pages, \$1.00 postpaid.

In this well-written little book the following features stand out in bold relief: (1) Geometry content is utilized as a source in exposing and in studying the processes of thinking. (2) Axioms are dealt with as assumptions and are critically evaluated. (3) Effective use is made of the true-false type of test. (4) Much historical matter is presented in a pleasant manner in connection with the numerous discussions at the close of individual exercises or of larger learning units.

In the writer's opinion a geometry which skillfully introduces such historical characters as Aristotle, Archimedes, Eratosthenes, Eudoxus, Philo, Plato, Pythagoras, Thales, Zero, Euler, Newton, and Lobatchewsky deserves a place in progressive high schools. Moreover, if the author's assertion that pupils while learning geometry "learn much about the progress by which effective thinking is done and show genuine progress in the development of a generally critical attitude towards what they read," then high-school teachers of plane geometry and all others who have a voice in selecting texts for geometry classes should be active in the elimination of the traditional text to make room for the humanized type of text.

## Book Reviews

Britannica Junior, edited and published by Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. 12 volumes bound in fabrikoid. \$69.75.

This new encyclopedia, written for boys and girls in the elementary grades and junior high school, is not an abridgement of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. It is a modern encyclopedia planned and written exclusively for children by eminent specialists in child education. While Britannica Junior is written in simple language, it is not "written down" to children. It is presented in interesting narrative form by those who have an affection for children and who know how to win their interest. It contains a wealth of beautiful pictures and is printed in large legible type easy to read.

The first volume, the "Ready Reference" volume, is a miniature encyclopedia in itself. It is more than an index to the set as it gives essential facts on every entry. In other words, a child wanting merely to identify a name, a word, a place, or a reference of any kind can quickly find the facts he is seeking. The last volume, the Study Guide, edited by Frederick L. Redefer, Executive Secretary of the Progressive Education Association, is a concerted effort to create a means whereby children can "learn by doing." Under every unit of study there are complete instructions comprehensible to the child for useful chores to do, games to play, things to make, music and art to create, stories to write, and other instructive occupations. Britannica Junior is a very valuable reference work for children and one worthy of the Britannica name.

J. C. D.

Hiker's Guide, Little Book Number 15. New York: Leisure League of America, 1934. Heavy paper cover, 96 pages, \$.25.

This interesting pamphlet is one of the extensive series now offered by the Leisure League of America, a nonprofit-making organization with headquarters at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York City. Other titles received for review will show the range of subjects represented in the series:

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5. What to Do About Your Invention
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10. A Garden in the House
12. How to Sell What You Write
14. Stamp Collecting

The list is being extended constantly and will cover the whole range of popular avocational in-

terests when it is completed. The authors are recognized authorities in their special fields who present their hobbies with the zeal of evangelists but with very little of the technical matter which might discourage beginners. If I were very wealthy I should consider establishing an endowment to place several sets of these pamphlets in every school library. Being unwealthy, I can only recommend them highly for use by students and teachers.

J. C. D.

Scientific Method in Supervisory Programs, the Seventh Yearbook of the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction of the National Education Association, by a committee of the Department, Paul T. Rankin, chairman. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1934, 194 pages.

The Arkansas traveler was amazed to see the 5.15, traditionally late, pulling in at 5.15. It developed, however, that it was "yesterday's 5.15" just twenty-four hours late. This review is on time, just one year late, for the Eighth Yearbook is now available. The tardiness must be blamed largely on the reviewer. To rationalize this delay it might be written that no review is necessary anyhow. You are either interested in supervision or you are not. If you are not, the review is of no importance. If you are, the Yearbooks of the Department are a part of your stock in trade, and you must have them, so you subscribe for them in advance of their publication.

Your reviewer would like the use of six or eight pages, not two paragraphs, to discuss the Seventh Yearbook. The Second Yearbook issued by the Department of Supervisors was also concerned with scientific methods, but it was widely criticized as being too preoccupied with the ultra-objective kind of "technics." It recommended quantitative measures for everybody, but, generally speaking, it overshot the mark. This Seventh Yearbook is not nearly so concerned about objective measures. But it is not, on that account, either more or less "scientific." It lacks wholly the unity which characterized the Sixth Yearbook, and it is patently not a group research project (the Sixth Yearbook was one of the most brilliantly conceived and executed group research projects yet published in the field of education) but only a symposium. The first chapter, on "The Scientific Method," is an excellent treatment of the general subject; but the following chapters are largely

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pleasant essays on various aspects of supervision with the word "scientific" used every now and then as a kind of self-conscious nod towards the first chapter.

J. C. D.

Education on the Air, Fifth Yearbook of the Institute for Education by Radio, edited by Josephine H. MacLatchy. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University, 1934, 366 pages.

The Yearbook is made up of about forty papers by as many authors; it is the proceedings of the Fifth Institute, held at Columbus, April 30 to May 2, 1934, with the addition of some material on researches. The papers fall under the headings "National Aspects," "School Broadcasting," "Educational Stations and Programs," "Relations and Activities," and "Research in Education by Radio." The Institute has no set program to promote, so the papers give a fairly wide range of points of view and represent a cross section of current theory and practice. The work of the Institute continues to be the most extensive and significant effort to discover the uses of radio broadcasting in education. The development of radio for education depends in a large part upon the efforts of teachers and others who have a special interest in the use of air channels for program material for listeners' purposes, not always identical with the sponsors' purposes. Every school ought to have a standing committee of the faculty on radio, a committee composed of enthusiasts, critics, and specialists. The yearbooks of the Institute would be excellent source material for the discussions and investigations directed by this committee.

J. C. D.

*Principles of Guidance*, second edition, by ARTHUR I. JONES. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1934, 456 pages, \$3.00.

"The purpose of guidance is to assist the individual through counsel to make wise choices, adjustments, and interpretations in connection with critical situations in his life in school, vocations, leisure time, and leadership." Such is the thesis which Professor Jones elaborates in this second edition of a text which is already widely known. The author is one of the liberal school who see guidance as a part of all education rather than a narrow field, the province of specialists. This bias may account for the popularity of the book, for the trend in guidance is indisputably away from the restricted concept characteristic of the earlier efforts in the field. The new edition is a thick meaty book, sprinkled with tables and graphs. Its merits as a text have been proved in the first edi-



tion, and it is assuredly of value as a handbook for specialists, administrators, and teachers. J. C. D.

*The Mother's Encyclopedia*, compiled and edited by the editors of *The Parents' Magazine*. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1933, 959 pages.

This interesting work, formerly issued in four volumes, consists of articles that have appeared in *The Parents Magazine*, with appropriate editing and condensing. There are cross references under every subject, subtitles on nearly every page, and a voluminous index. "School mothers" and all the others whose career is children will find many uses for this book, the only work of its kind now available. The articles cover practically every problem of child rearing from prenatal care through adolescence.

J. C. D.

*Discovering Music*, by HOWARD D. McKINNEY and W. R. ANDERSON. New York: American Book Company, 325 pages, \$3.00.

Real discovery of music implies voyages that present truly difficult courses to steer. This book undertakes to chart such a course as will encompass opportunities and emphases that lie directly in the path of the present-day student.

The school's struggle to encourage favorable reaction by youths to music calls for good music; else the discovery of music is futile. The authors have nicely pinned responsibility for the criterion for good music upon the instructor—"Is what the composer striving to do, worth doing?"

This book presents some aspects of music which can be easily grasped by nonparticipating music students (those studying theory, harmony, and appreciation of music), and other aspects which appeal to participating students (members of orchestra, band, and chorus). For the former groups much carefully selected program music is explained and evaluated discriminatingly in the interest of "cultivating an eloquence of heart." For the latter groups many works which are frequently performed in our school repertoires are discussed.

As is suggested by its title, this stimulating book opens a new field for tolerance, inclusiveness, and generosity in conception and content of school music. And in the peculiarly selfish field of music appreciation, it is well that we should have profit sharing for students and teacher.

P. W. L. C., Jr.

#### ADDITIONAL BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS OF INTEREST TO SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

*Bookbinding Made Easy*, by LEE M. KLINEFELTER.  
Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company,

1934, cloth, illustrated, 84 pages, \$1.00.

*How to Judge Motion Pictures*, by SARAH MACLEAN MULLEN. Pittsburgh: published by Scholastic, 1934, paper covers, 60 pages, \$25.

The pamphlet, published for the National Scholastic Photoplay Club, contains a foreword by Dr. William L. Lewin and a section on "How to Organize a Photoplay Club."

*Historical Fiction* (and other reading references for history classes in junior and senior high schools), by HANNAH LOGASA. Philadelphia: McKirley Publishing Company, 1934, 144 pages, heavy paper covers, \$1.00. (Revised and enlarged edition.)

Elementary School Libraries, Standards for Organization, School Library List. Bulletin 75. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Public Instruction, 1934, 120 pages.

*The Open Door*, a library reference workbook, by EDWINA KENNEY HEGLAND and SHERIDAN HEGLAND. Stanford University, California: Stanford University Press, 1934, paper covers, 36 pages, \$35.

A Newspaper Unit for Schools, by B. J. R. STOLFER. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 13 pages. (Reprinted from *Teachers College Record*, October 1934.)

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